

**L'ARMÉE ROMAINE ET LA RELIGION
SOUS LE HAUT-EMPIRE ROMAIN**

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Shock And Awe: Battles Of The Gods In Roman Imperial Warfare, Part I

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As Titus entered the Temple at Jerusalem in September 70 A.D., Josephus has the later emperor marvel: “With god’s help we waged war. And god was the one who took the Jews down from those fortifications, since what can the hands of men or siege-machines do against those towers?”¹ Two centuries later, when bands of Juthungi and Marcomanni threatened Italy, the *Historia Augusta* records that Aurelian urged the Senate by letter to consult the Sibylline Books: “for it is not inglorious to win when the gods provide aid. Among our ancestors many wars were ended in this way and likewise begun.”²

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¹ Jos. *BJ* 6.411; cf. 6.399, 401; note also Liv. 26.48.3 on divine aid in Scipio Africanus Maior’s capture of Carthago Nova.

The following short titles will be used: Ankersdorfer = H. Ankersdorfer, *Studien zur Religion des römischen Heeres von Augustus bis Diokletian*, diss.Konstanz, 1973; Barnes, *Constantine* = T.D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius*, 1981 (Cambridge, Mass.); Cichorius = C. Cichorius, *Die Reliefs der Traianssäule*, 1896-1900 (Berlin); v.Dom., *Fahnen* = A. von Domaszewski, *Die Fahnen im römischer Heere, Aufsätze zur römischen Heeresgeschichte*, 1972 (Darmstadt), pp.1-80; v.Dom., *Religion* = A. von Domaszewski, *Die Religion des römischen Heeres*, 1895 (Trier); Fink = R.O. Fink, *Roman Military Records on Papyrus*, *APA Mono.*, XXVI, 1971 (Cleveland); Helgeland, *Army* = J. Helgeland, *Roman Army Religion*, *ANRW* II.16.2, 1978, pp.1470-1505; Helgeland, *Christians* = J. Helgeland, *Christians and the Roman Army from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine*, *ANRW*, II.23.1, 1979, pp.724-834; Lepper/Frere = F. Lepper/S. Frere, *Trajan’s Column*, 1988 (Gloucester); Nock, *HTR* = A.D. Nock, *The Roman Army and the Roman Religious Year*, *HTR*, XL, 1952, pp.186-252; Renel = C. Renel, *Cultes militaires de Rome: Les Enseignes*, 1903 (Lyon/Paris); Rüpke = J. Rüpke, *Domi Militiae: Die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom*, 1990 (Stuttgart); Stäcker = J. Stäcker, *Princeps und miles. Studien zum Bindungs- und Nahverhältnis von Kaiser und Soldat im 1. und 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, *Spudasmata*, XCI, 2003 (Hildesheim); Stoll, *Integration* = O. Stoll, *Zwischen Integration und Abgrenzung: Die Religion des Römischen Heeres im Nahen Osten*, 2001 (St. Katharinen); Webster = G. Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army*, 1969 (London); Whitby, *Deus* = M. Whitby, *Deus Nobiscum: Christianity, Warfare and Morale in the Late Antiquity*, edd. M. Austin, J. Harries, C. Smith, *Modus Operandi: Essays in Honour of Geoffrey Rickman*, *BICS*, Suppl. LXXI, 1998 (London), pp.191-208.

² *HA*, *Aurel.* 20.7: *neque enim indecorum est dis iuvantibus vincere. Sic apud maiores nostros multa finita sunt bella, sic coepta.* On the identity of these invaders, variously named in Dexippus, Zosimus, and *HA, Aurel.*, see F. Paschoud, *Zosime, Histoire Nouvelle* I², 2000 (Paris), p.167 n.76, following R.T. Saunders, Aurelian’s Two luthungian Wars, *Historia*, XLI, 1992, pp. 311-27; a slightly different version of Aurelian’s western campaigns of 270-271 in A. Watson, *Aurelian and the Third Century*, 1999 (London/New York), pp.48-54, 218-21, who would reverse the order of Dexippus frs. 6-7 (*FGrH* 100). My concern is with the idea expressed and not the historicity of Aurelian’s letter, which (like most documents and letters in the *HA*) is probably a forgery: cf. F. Paschoud, *Histoire Auguste* V.1: *Vies d’Aurélien et de Tacite*², 2002 (Paris), p.2.

[[226]] War and religion are inextricably linked at the level of both the individual and the state. The unpredictability of war and the stress of personal endangerment can often cause even diehard skeptics and agnostics to “get religion.” The talismans worn to protect individual ancient warriors have parallels in stories of modern soldiers, for whom a Bible in the backpack or a New Testament in the shirt pocket absorbed the shock of an otherwise fatal bullet.³ At the state level religion can both cause and justify war—the so-called “holy war,” known from the Old Testament, Christianized as “crusade,” and Islamized in the currently all too familiar *Jihad*. Relatively speaking, the voluminous literature on holy war scarcely needs further augmentation.⁴

At an intermediary level between religion for the individual’s protection and religion as *casus belli* lies the role of religion in military operations—divinities as active agents in victory or defeat—*Schlachthelfer*, as the Germans say. Wars of the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Near East featured simultaneous battles of terrestrial armies and celestial combats of rival national deities, who could also intervene in the terrestrial fray via lightning, hail, wind, plagues of insects, and insertion of panic.⁵ The active role of Homeric gods in battles on the Trojan plain [[227]] in the Iliad coincides with contemporary concepts of militarily active deities in the Near East. Archaic Greek thought, however, later combined the gods’ determination of victory with concepts of *hybris* and jealousy, to which politicians could still allude in the second century B.C. Even two centuries earlier, Chabrias had to remind his army that they would fight men of flesh and blood and not the enemy’s gods.⁶ Hellenistic Jewish thought, including the Maccabean historians and the Qumran texts, further developed Near Eastern concepts: Yahweh’s

³ Cf. on Roman use of amulets R. MacMullen, Constantine and the Miraculous, *GRBS*, IX, 1968, p.87 with nn.21-23; L. Petculescu, “Utere felix” and “Optime maxime con(serva)” Mounts from Dacia, edd. V.A. Maxfield/M.J. Dobson, *Roman Frontier Studies* 1989, 1991 (Exeter), pp.392-94, and Miniature Spearhead Fittings of Military Equipment in Roman Dacia, *Dacia*, n.s. XXXVII, 1993, pp.181-96; religious emblems (often apotropaic) on military equipment: O. Stoll, *Excubatio ad signa. Die Wache bei den Fahnen in der römischen Armee und andere Beiträge zur kulturgeschichtlichen und historischen Bedeutung eines militärischen Symbols*, 1995 (St. Katharinen), pp.21-25; cf. P. Couissin, *Les armes romaines*, 1926 (Paris), pp.112-15: “les armes surnaturelles”; on Zoroastrian teachings about talismans to protect warriors (current among Parthians and Sasanid Persians?), see *Yasht* 14.1-38, tr. J. Darmesteter, *The Zend-Avesta*, Part II: *The Sirozahs, Yastas and Nyayis, Sacred Books of the East*, XXIII, 1883 (Oxford), pp.232-41.

⁴ On the supposedly unique Hebrew notion of holy war, the much cited study of G. von Rad, *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel*, 1958 (Göttingen) (= *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, tr. M.J. Dawn, 1991, Grand Rapids) was first critiqued (others have followed suit) by M. Weippert, “Heiliger Krieg” in Israel und Assyrien, *ZATW*, LXXXIV, 1972, pp.460-93, who demolished much of von Rad’s thesis with parallels from other contemporary Near Eastern states. Cf. C. Batsche, *La guerre et les rites de guerre dans le judaïsme du deuxième Temple*, *JSJ*, Suppl. XCIII, 2005 (Leiden), pp.23-33, for an historiographical survey of biblical holy war with a preference for S. Niditch’s multiple biblical theories of war: *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study of the Ethics of Violence*, 1993 (Oxford). Batsche (pp.408-46) curiously divorces from holy war the Hebrew concept of *h’ērem* (anathema), associated with its extreme violence, and compares *h’ērem* to the Roman concept of *devotio*. His contention (p.270) that no concepts of offensive and defensive war existed before Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) ignores these ideas in Greek and Roman writers. Crusades: e.g., J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 1986 (Philadelphia) with relevant bibliography; *Jihad*: e.g., R. Firestone, *Jihad: The Origin of Holy War in Islam*, 1999 (Oxford); M. Bonner, *Jihad in Islamic History*, 2006 (Princeton); cf. on all these issues J.A. Aho, *Religious Mythology and the Art of War: Comparative Religious Symbolisms of Military Violence*, 1981 (Westport), esp. pp.80-100, 165-93.

⁵ See W. Speyer, Die Hilfe und Epiphanie einer Gottheit, eines Heroes und eines Heiligen in der Schlacht, edd. E. Dassmann/K. Suso Frank, *Pietas: Festschrift für Bernhard Kötting*, *JbAC*, VIII, 1980, pp.58-60; M. Weinfeld, Divine Intervention in War in Ancient Israel and the Ancient Near East, edd. H. Tadmor/M. Weinfeld, *History, Historiography and Interpretation: Studies in Biblical and Cuneiform Literature*, 1983 (Jerusalem), pp.121-47; cf. Ios. 24:12; E. Neufeld, Insects as Warfare Agents in the Ancient Near East, *Orientalia*, XLIX, 1980, pp.30-59; for the Medieval period see F. Graus, Der Heilige als Schlachthelfer—Zur Nationalisierung einer Wunderzählung in der mittelalterlichen Chronistik, edd. K.-U. Jaschke/R. Wenskus, *Festschrift für Helmut Beremann zum 65. Geburtstag*, 1977 (Sigmaringen) pp.338-48, who (despite a massive bibliography) does not address continuities and differences in the concept between Antiquity and the Middle Ages.

⁶ Hdt. 7.10e; Paus. 7.14.6 (Critolaus, 147 B.C.); Chabrias: Polyæn. *Strat.* 3.11.1; cf. Speyer (*supra* n.5), p.73.

messengers began to be conceived as a heavenly army under the command of an *archistrategos* (archangel), eventually identified as Michael. Along with other Old Testament figures like Moses and Solomon, Michael later became associated with magic in various Roman-era texts, but the Christian Origen presented Michael as the military protector of God's people, capable of both celestial and terrestrial aid. The Archangel Michael thus became a forerunner of the Byzantine military saints, a most curious legion of *virii militares*, whose postmortem *miracula* far exceeded their meager terrestrial *res gestae*.⁷

Reliance on divine aid, however, could also be taken to extremes: concepts of bloodless victory and victory without battle (*incruenta victoria*, *victoria sine certamine*) flourished among Christians in the reign of Theodosius I (379-395) and into the early fifth century, especially in the West.⁸ The view owed little to Graeco-Roman theory on the superiority of stratagems to open battle, a theme emerging in the fifth century B.C. from sophistic thought and the abandonment of traditional rules of warfare in the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides, Xenophon, and Aeneas Tacticus espoused this doctrine and centuries later Vegetius codified it.⁹ In stratagematic theory religion could be manipulated to raise morale or deter the influence of unfavorable omens [[228]] and hasty desires for battle, or, most of all, to gain advantage through exploiting the enemy's beliefs and religious practices. Stratagem, however, required human action in support of guile. In his *Stromateis* Clement of Alexandria (c.150-211/216) appropriated Hellenistic Jewish views of Moses as a *rusé* general inspired by stratagematic theory, just as Julius Africanus' digest of military magic in his *Cesti*, composed on the eve of Severus Alexander's Persian war (232), belongs to the poliorcetic branch of stratagematic doctrine seen in Aeneas Tacticus and Philo Mechanicus.¹⁰ Rather than stratagematic theory, Christian bloodless victory chiefly derived from the

⁷ C. Walter, *The Warrior Saints in Byzantine Art and Tradition*, 2003 (Aldershot/Burlington), pp.10-15, 28-29, 34-36, 261-66, 283, 292; J.P. Rohland, *Der Erzengel Michael Arzt und Feldherr: Zwei Aspekte des vor- und frühbyzantinischen Michaelskultes*, ZRGG, Beiheft XIX, 1977 (Leiden), pp.42, 55-56, 76-77, 106-111, 125-28, 136; H. Delehay, *Les légendes grecques des saints militaires*, 1909 (Paris), p.112. The earliest attested military miracle of a military saint belongs to Theodorus Tiro, martyred under Galerius (293-311), who reappeared in the crisis after Adrianople to save his native city of Pontic Euchaïta (mod. Avkhat) by shaking a cross at the Goths. Gregory of Nyssa immortalized the event in a homily at Euchaïta on Theodorus' feast day (17 February) the following year (probably 380). See Gr. Nyss. *Thdr. (Opera)*, ed. J.P. Cavarnos, X.1.2, pp.61-72); J. Leemanns, W. Mayer, P. Allen, B. Dehandschutter, "Let Us Die That We May Live." *Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria (c. AD 350-AD 450)*, 2003 (London/New York), pp.82-90; Walter, pp.45-56; cf. C. Zuckerman, Cappadocian Fathers and the Goths, *TM*, XI, 1991, pp.473-86.

⁸ See F. Heim, La thème de la "victoire sans combat" chez Ambrose, ed. Y.-M. Duval, *Ambroise de Milan. XVI^e Centenaire de son élection épiscopale*, 1974 (Paris), pp. 267-81; cf. G. Zecchini, S. Ambrogio e le origini del motivo della vittoria incruenta, *RSCI*, XXXVIII, 1984, pp.391-404. A form of the idea already occurs at Euseb. *VC* 1.27.1, 4.5.2. See also M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, 1986 (Cambridge), p.109, and victory through prayer at Sapor II's failed siege of Nisibis in 350: *Chron.Pasch.* p.537.6-7 Bonn (from Philostorgius' *Arian HE?*); Theoph. *Chron. AM* 5841, p.39 Bonn.

⁹ The concept of bloodless victory was not unknown to Sallust, an advocate of the Odysseus ethos associated with a preference for stratagems: *Hist.* 3.29 Maurenbrecher (=Serv. in *Aen.* 11.421=Isid. *Orig.* 18.2.1): *non est autem iucunda victoria quae per immensa detrimenta contingit: et hoc est, quod laudat Sallustius duces victoriam incruento exercitu deportasse*; cf. Sall. *Cat.* 1.5-2.6; Odysseus ethos: E.L. Wheeler, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery*, *Mnemosyne*, Suppl., CVIII, 1988 (Leiden), pp.xiii-xiv. Note also Dio 68.19.3: Trajan's νίκη ἀσέλγιος ἄναμος, when Parthamasiris surrendered the Armenian crown without a fight in 114.

¹⁰ Clem.Al. *Strom.* 1.24, 160.1-3 with Wheeler (*supra* n.9), pp.22-23; Africanus: E.L. Wheeler, Why the Romans Can't Defeat the Parthians: Julius Africanus and the Strategy of Magic, ed. W. Groenman-van Waateringe *et al.*, *Roman Frontier Studies 1995*, 1997 (Oxford), pp.287-92, and Cambyses and the Persea Tree: Magic in Damocritus' *Tactica* and Julius Africanus' Κεστοί, ed. E. Dabrowa, *Donum Amicitiae: Studies in Ancient History Published on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of Foundation of the Department of Ancient History of the Jagiellonian University*, *Electrum*, I, 1997 (Cracow), pp. 209-20; cf. F.C.R. Thee, *Julius*

attitude found in Origen, who opposed Christian involvement in government whether in a civilian or military capacity: Christians need only pray and God would destroy the enemy, just as Moses had told the Hebrews at the Red Sea to keep quiet and the Lord would do the fighting. Like Clement on Moses, Origen may also have borrowed from Hellenistic Jewish thought: Philo of Alexandria had characterized the Egyptian army's obliteration at the Red Sea as a bloodless victory.¹¹

St. Ambrose's final position on bloodless victory, not long before his death (397), moderated the extreme positions of Origen and Ambrose's contemporaries like Paulinus of Nola: human agency must supplement prayers for divine aid. Ambrose approximated the view of the pious Xenophon centuries earlier: the gods help those who help themselves, a standpoint equivalent to the modern expression, "Praise God, but pass the ammunition."¹² The position of Xenophon and Ambrose in rejecting exclusive dependency on divine aid contrasts with the more cynical "God is on the side of the biggest battalions." This view, as Thucydides' Melian Dialogue makes clear, is tied to arguments of "might is right" and the *physis* vs. *nomos* debates of the fifth century B.C.¹³

[[229]] Ancient Near Eastern views of the active role of gods in warfare and derivative Christian ideas, citing Old Testament exempla, provide a chronological and conceptual framework for assessing Roman beliefs and practices. Means of soliciting divine aid for military action seem constant: prayer, sacrifices, magical techniques to compel help (theurgy), holy objects, symbols or pictures of gods (e.g. *signa militaria*), and the grave or relics of a hero (or saint) to protect territory or a city. A belief that the gods would defend their own territory inhabited by their worshipers against outside invaders was common throughout the Mediterranean world.¹⁴ Thus for Romans the general means to divine aid would not be unique, but only how Roman customs and particular situations conditioned those means.

Africanus and the Early Christian View of Magic, Hermeneutische Untersuchungen zur Theologie, XIX, 1984 (Tübingen); W. Adler, Sextus Julius Africanus and the Roman Near East in the Third Century, *JThS*, LV, 2004, pp.520-50.

¹¹ Origen *C. Cels.* 8.69-70, 73, citing Ex. 14:14 (Vulgate: *Dominus pugnabit pro vobis et vos tacebitis.*); Helgeland, Christians, p.751; Philo *Moses* 1.180; cf. 1.142, 173-74. Eusebius (cf. *supra* n.8) was well versed in the works of Philo: F. Heim, *La théologie de la victoire de Constantin à Théodose, Théologie Historique*, LXXXIX, 1992 (Paris), pp.95-96.

¹² Ambrose: Heim (*supra* n.8), pp.279-81; Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.5-6, 2.3.3-4; cf. Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), quoted in C. Ardant du Picq, *Battle Studies: Ancient and Modern*, trr. Col. J.N Greely/Maj. R.C. Cotton, 1987 (Mechanicsville, PA), p.146 (= *Études sur le combat*, 1978 [Paris], p.74): "Put your trust in God and aim at their shoelaces." Note also the Byzantine view of self-help with divine aid: Akathist Synaxarium, *PG*, XC, col. 1349, quoted by N.H. Baynes, The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople, in *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays*, 1955 (London), p.259. A semi-secularized form of the concept, replacing god(s) with *fortuna*, was proverbial by the second century B.C.: Enn. *Ann. fr.* 255 Warmington (=Macrob. *Sat.* 6.1.52); Ter. *Phorm.* 203; Cic. *Fin.* 3.16, *Tusc.* 2.11; Verg. *Aen.* 10.284; Ov. *Met.* 10.586; Plin. *Ep.* 6.16.11.

¹³ Thuc. 5.105.1-3; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 4.17.5 (*deos fortioribus adesse*). An attempt to connect arguments about the right of the stronger and Xenophon's "law of war" (*Cyr.* 7.5.73) to a view that victory is the gift of the gods seems misguided: J.F. Fears, The Theology of Victory at Rome: Approaches and Problems, *ANRW*, II.17.2, 1981, pp.755-56. Thucydides' position is atheistic or agnostic and Xenophon distinguishes gratitude to the gods for victory (*Cyr.* 7.5.72) from the *nomos* of human beings that all property of the defeated belongs to the victor (7.5.73). Earlier expressions of what Xenophon calls "the law of war" (without use of this phrase), Thuc. 4.98.2 (*nomos* of the Greeks) and *Dissoi Logoi* 3.5, 16, are also secular. R. Tomlin (Christianity and the Late Roman Army, edd. S.N.C. Lieu/D. Montserrat, *Constantine: History, Historiography and Legend*, 1998, London/New York, p.34) deduces the argument that God is on the side of the biggest battalions from Sulp. Sev. *V. Martini* 20.3, but Magnus Maximus' claim that the fact of his victory demonstrates God's approval is not really identical with this point of view. Cf. Constantius II's response to a Nicene's rebuke of his Arianism (Lucifer Calaritanus, *De regibus apostaticis* 1, *PL*, XIII, col. 793B): *nisi placitum esset Deo quod illam persequar fidem... numquam profecto adhuc in imperio flourerem.*

¹⁴ E.g., Tac. *Hist.* 4.53.3: *praesides imperii deos*; Val. Max. 1.1.8: *non mirum igitur si pro eo imperio augendo custodiendoque pertinax deorum indulgentia semper excubuit*; Speyer (*supra* n.5), pp.58, 72.

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Rome, as Cicero boasted, had conquered the world because Romans excelled all other nations in piety,¹⁵ although the skepticism and rationalism eroding that piety in Cicero's day had precedents more than a century earlier. M. Claudius Marcellus, *augur optimus*, five times consul, and the conqueror of Syracuse (211 B.C.), confessed that he traveled in a closed litter to avoiding seeing adverse omens that might disrupt his plans. Perhaps that practice obscured divine portents of the Carthaginian ambush that killed him. Cato Maior complained that the negligence of colleagues missed *auguria* and *auspicia*.¹⁶ Scipio Africanus Maior even toyed with Hellenistic concepts of divine favor for individual generals as a key to victory—a step toward the personalization of a theology of victory, which Sulla later exploited.¹⁷

Apart from the individual general's charisma, the gods as active agents seem absent from the wars of the Late Republic. The rites of *devotio* and *evocatio*, “religiöse Waffen” (*pace* Rüpke), have essentially vanished; Caesar's own writings never refer to pre-battle sacrifices. Similarly, Cicero's *De divinatione* attacked divination, noting the general disregard of the *tripudium* of the sacred chickens and how the prolongation of *imperium* in pro-magistracies meant the absence of proper auspices in wars.¹⁸ Nor do we see the mania of vowing temples for military success that marked the beginning of a theology of victory at Rome in the 290s B.C. during the Third Samnite War, although the practice was not totally abandoned. Indeed detailed records of prodigies and portents declined after 52 B.C. and generally disappeared after 27 B.C. A drought of reported dreams and visions by generals and emperors has been discerned between Julius Caesar and Aurelian.¹⁹ Religious elements in the **[[230]]** process of Late Republican military success appear formalized rather than genuine and only lurk in the shadows of individual generals' personal brilliance. A failure of Roman religious and theological concepts to keep pace with political and cultural developments and imperial expansion can be adduced.²⁰

Scholarly skepticism enhances a *perceived* decline of religious involvement in war. In one view, all epiphanies of the Republican era must be literary inventions from Greek influence, as the *numina* of native Roman religion were unseen. Further, some duties of the *fetiales* are reduced to Augustus' creative re-invention of traditional Roman religion.²¹ In contrast to an apparent decline of the religious element in Roman warfare from the Middle or Late Republic, Christianity, beginning with Constantine, seems to have revitalized religion's role, adding a new motivation for morale, an abundance of miracles on the

¹⁵ Cic. *Har.Resp.* 19; *Nat.D.* 2.8; cf. *Plb.* 6.56.6-8.

¹⁶ Marcellus: Cic. *Div.* 2.77; ambush: sources in *MRR* I, p.290; Cato *Orig.* fr. 132, *HRR* I², p.95=Cic. *Div.* 1.28; cf. Cic. *Nat.D.* 2.9.

¹⁷ F.W. Walbank, The Scipionic Legend, *PCPS*, n.s. XIII, 1967, pp.54-69; Fears (*supra* n.13), pp.755, 789, 791-96; R.H. Storch, The “Absolutist” Theology of Victory: Its Place in the Late Empire, *C&M*, XXIX, 1972, pp.197-98; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion*, 1979 (Oxford), pp.29-39, 57-61; Heim (*supra* n.11), pp.21-23.

¹⁸ Rüpke, pp.152-53, 155-64; Cic. *Div.* 2.76-79; *Nat.D.* 2.9.

¹⁹ Fears (*supra* n.13), pp.773-74; temples: Caesar's to Venus Genetrix, vowed before the Battle of Pharsalus (App. *BC* 2.284; cf. Dio 48.22.2); Augustus' to Mars Ultor, pledged at Philippi (Suet. *Aug.* 29.2); prodigies/portents: Liebeschuetz (*supra* n.17), pp.57-58; dreams/visions: G. Weber, *Kaiser, Träume und Visionen in Prinzipat und Spätantike*, *Historia Einzelschriften* 143, 2000 (Stuttgart), p.311; on the sources' neglect in reporting religious aspects of war in the last decades of the Republic—not an indication of the abandonment of religious practice, see J. Harmand, *L'armée et le soldat à Rome*, 1967 (Paris), pp.464-66.

²⁰ C. Ando, A Religion for the Empire, ed. *id.*, *Roman Religion*, 2003 (Edinburgh), p.229.

²¹ Speyer (*supra* n.5), pp.69-70; *fetiales*: Rüpke, pp.105-107; *contra*, M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome*, I: *A History*, 1998 (Cambridge), p.133 n.52. Note also J. Scheid on the often presumed perfunctory nature of “official religion”: Sujets religieux et gestes rituels figurés sur la colonne Aurélienne. Questions sur la religion à époque de Marc Aurèle, edd. J. Scheid/V. Huet, *La colonne Aurélienne. Geste et image sur la colonne de Marc Aurèle à Rome*, 2000 (Turnhout), p.234.

battlefield, and even a religious element in foreign policy (war in defense of persecuted Christians or against non-believers).²²

These general impressions—of which the accuracy in detail demands evaluation—help narrow the framework of this discussion to the role of religion in Roman military operations between the reigns of Augustus and Constantine and the extent to which battles of the gods occurred. Space precludes any pretense to comprehensive treatment of material over three centuries. But this theme cannot be divorced from the extent to which the Roman army relied on religion as a motivating tool and morale booster. The focus will not be on forms of religion/magic for the individual soldier's personal safety, but rather on religion and/or magic used *modo grosso*. Indeed any distinction between “natural” and “supernatural” is anachronistic for Antiquity.²³

An absence of religion in the Roman army of the Principate can hardly be alleged. The proliferation of cults supplementing the so-called “official religion” attests a need for religious experience among Roman soldiers, although the exclusively military membership of such cults is not demonstrable. The cults of Iuppiter Dolichenus and Silvanus, for example, however **[[231]]** popular with soldiers, attracted civilians.²⁴ Similarly, a military function of these “new gods” relevant to the battlefield is elusive. The many vague dedications of *vota* are more often assumed than proved to be related to military operations.²⁵ Nor does the official Roman pantheon, worshipped in the army as a duty and frequently glorified on coins, necessarily indicate a real belief in divine aid rather than propagandistic celebration. The multiplication of cults to various *genii* by the third century suggests an increasing abstraction in the army's religion. Between Decius and Diocletian, as some believe, the “old gods” of the traditional Roman pantheon became interchangeable.²⁶ Indeed innumerable issues of coins featuring the goddess Victoria

²² See Whitby, *Deus*, pp.191-208, who tries too hard to make the fourth century resemble the fifth and sixth; *cf.* MacMullen (*supra* n.3), pp.85-86; Constantine “the crusader”: G. Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth*, 1993 (Princeton), pp.90-97.

²³ “Supernatural” as anachronistic: Weber (*supra* n.19), p.2 n.11, following M.T. Fögen, *Die Enteignung der Wahrsager. Studien zum kaiserlichen Wissensmonopol in der Spätantike*, 1993 (Frankfurt a.M.), p.49 n.65. The quagmire of debate over the distinction between religion and magic will not claim another victim here. A one-size-fits-all universal definition of magic is impossible and ahistorical. For recent discussions see P. Schäfer, *Magic and Religion in Ancient Judaism*, edd., P. Schäfer/H.G. Kippenberg, *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar and Symposium*, 1997 (Leiden), pp.19-26; M.W. Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Graeco-Roman World*, 2001 (London/New York), pp.18-26. For present purposes, magic will be considered, following Beard *et al.* (*supra* n.21, p.154), a set of operations conflicting with the accepted rules of religion, science, or logic in a particular society. For lack of a better English expression (*cf.* Weber's resort to *göttlich* and *numinosen*), the term “supernatural” will be used in this paper occasionally.

²⁴ M.P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army*, *EPRO*, LXIII, 1978 (Leiden), pp.38-45, 77; P.F. Dorsey, *The Cult of Silvanus: A Study in Roman Folk Religion*, 1992 (Leiden), pp.121-22; *cf.* O. Stoll, “Silvanus in Steinbruch.” *Kulttransfer durch Soldaten des legio IIII Scythica in Syria*, ed. L. Schumacher, *Religion—Wirtschaft—Technik: Althistorische Beiträge zur Entstehung neuer kulturelle Strukturmuster im historischen Raum Nordafrika/Kleinasien/Syrien*, 1998 (St. Katharinen), pp.99-145. Note also Stoll's *Habilitationsschrift, Integration* (*supra* n.1), where distinctions of military from civilian religion are shown fallacious and the “total institution” thesis of N. Pollard (*Soldiers, Cities, and Civilians in Roman Syria*, 2000, Ann Arbor), elaborating on the views of B. Shaw, *Soldiers and Society: The Army in Numidia*, *Opus*, II.1, 1983, pp.133-59, is decimated.

²⁵ Conceded by Webster, pp.266-67; *cf.* Ankersdorfer, p.23. Helgeland (*Army*, p.1477), claims dedications to the *aquila* and/or the *signa militaria* (e.g. *CIL* VII 1031, *ILS* 2557, *RIB* 1263) were thought to guarantee success in battle, but such texts hardly justify this assumption.

²⁶ E. Birley, *The Religion of the Roman Army: 1895-1977*, *ANRW*, II.16.2, 1978, p.1515, following G. Alföldy, *Geschichte des religiösen Lebens in Aquincum*, *AArchHung*, XIII, 1961, pp.103-24; *genii*: M.P. Speidel/A. Dimitrova-Milceva, *The Cult of the Genii in the Roman Army and a New Military Deity*, *ANRW*, II.16.2, 1978, pp.1542-55; old gods interchangeable: Nock, *HTR*, pp.220-21.

commemorate an outcome but not necessarily a specific act creating that result.²⁷ Moreover, the rationalistic-sociological approach, which would limit religion's function to bonding the soldier to the state and his individual unit, creating *esprit de corps*, and structuring the soldier's life, downplays the supernatural element in religion. Certainly one goal of discipline is to control fear through fostering ritual behavior, but discipline and social structure alone do not win battles.²⁸

Modern skepticism of divine intervention in military operations enjoys the privilege of hindsight and little appreciates the perceptions and feelings of participants in the actual events. The epiphany successfully contrived as a stratagem could indeed be handed down in the sources as a real epiphany,²⁹ but the ruse's effectiveness also attests the act's credibility to **[[232]]** the target (whether the enemy or one's own forces). Rationalization of all supernatural occurrences in war as inventions of historians or interpretations *post eventum*, whether as excuses for defeat or the victor's propaganda, further presumes that the rationally inexplicable cannot have happened. Chance and the unforeseen have their role in war no less today than in Antiquity. The modern *aporia* in dealing with the supernatural in ancient warfare must also consider that rationalization of war-making began already in the fifth century B.C., as the contrasting role of the gods in Herodotus and Thucydides readily demonstrates. Only after the outcome of wars had been removed from the exclusive prerogative of the gods and included in the realm of activities subject to human calculation could a genre of military theory be composed, although the uncertainty and unpredictability of war remain *motifs* of that genre even today. Whether supernatural intervention in battle is taken as *Volksglaube*, rationalized as chance, or accepted as *miraculum*, a role for the supernatural in ancient military operations cannot be dismissed out of hand. As Wilamowitz emphasized: "Die Götter sind da."³⁰

²⁷ *Contra*, Y. Le Bohec, *La troisième légion Auguste*, 1989 (Paris), p.554 n.191 on dedications to Victoria Augusta; cf. Ankersdorfer, pp.108, 109, 135, 145, 220 on coins with and dedications to Victoria. The two massive studies of Fears, *supra* n.13: pp.736-826, and *The Cult of Jupiter and Roman Imperial Ideology*, *ANRW*, II.17.1, 1981, pp.3-141, become (after useful beginnings) studies of the hyperbole of ideology rather than religion. Cf. Weber's criticism of Fears: *supra* n.19, p.246 n.8. For the increasing emphasis on the emperor's invincibility from Septimius Severus on, see Storch (*supra* n.17), pp.198-205.

²⁸ An example of the sociological approach in Helgeland, *Army*, pp.1470-71, 1473, 1501, who finds the manipulation of religion for purposes of morale (e.g., Webster, p.167) uncharacteristic of Roman army religion. His view can be seen as self-contradictory, given Helgeland's approval of religion for building *esprit de corps*. Helgeland is followed almost literally by M. Clauss, *Heerwesen (Heeresreligion)*, *RAC*, XIII, 1986, coll.1088, 1090. Cf. Stoll's critique of Helgeland from a religious perspective (*Integration*, p.147): "Allerdings bleibt die Analyse des Systems in gewisser Weise ein akademisches Konstrukt, eine Hülle ohne ausreichende Absicherung durch entsprechendes Material." Ankersdorfer's classification of cults in the army (pp.215-22) does not address the issue of *Schlachthelfer*.

²⁹ *Sic* Speyer (*supra* n.5), p.57. Cf. the contrivance of the Arian bishop Valens, who in bringing the first news of the victory at Mursa (351) to Constantius II, claimed an angel had been the messenger. *Facilis ad credendum imperator palam postea dicere est solitus, se Valentis meritis, non virtute exercitus vicisse*: Sulp. Sev. *Chron.* 2.38.3. W.V. Harris (Constantine's Dream, *Klio*, LXXXVII, 2005, p.492 with n.1) would reject all pre-battle dreams of generals as deceptions for boosting morale, despite Weber's view (*supra* n.19, pp.10-13, 310-11) that modern historians have no objective basis for denying the historicity of an ancient individual's report of dreams or visions. Yet Weber later concedes that only fulfilled and successful dreams/visions survive in the sources. On Ti. Iulius Alexander's contrivance of Vespasian's *miracula* (not military acts) at Alexandria in 70, see A. Henrichs, *Vespasian's Visit to Alexandria*, *ZPE*, III, 1968, pp.51-80; note also G.W. Bowersock, *The Mechanics of Subversion in the Roman Provinces*, edd. A. Giovannini/D. van Berchem, *Opposition et résistances à l'empire d'Auguste a Trajan, Entretiens Hardt* 33, 1987 (Vandoeuvres/Geneva), pp.291-317, although not all his cases of contrived *miracula* equally convince.

³⁰ See the cautionary remarks of Speyer (*supra* n.5, p.55-58, 62, 73) against a blanket rationalistic rejection of religion's role in ancient warfare; similar views in W.K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, III: *Religion*, 1979 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), pp.1-10, citing Wilamowitz at p.3 n.6; MacMullen (*supra* n.3), p.98. Note also the embarrassment of Weiss (n.41 *infra*, pp. 238-40, 250, 257-58) in arguing for the historicity of the *miraculum* of Constantine's vision of 310, and likewise rationalizations of *miracula*

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As well-known in practice and theory (e.g. Onas. 10.26), soldiers fight more courageously when they believe the gods favor their undertaking. Against external enemies and usurpers or rebels with strong regional ties and non-Roman culture (e.g. Jews), Roman gods were clearly distinguished. Civil wars and intra-cultural conflicts were religiously more problematic.³¹ Plautus' parody of pre-battle rituals, in which both sides utter vows to Jupiter, illustrates the dilemma, for only one side would have its prayers answered. Marcus Aurelius downplayed the revolt of the Syrian governor Avidius Cassius in 175, since he knew that he had not lost the gods' favor.³² In contrast, from the Christian perspective Constantine's espousal of Christianity in contests with Maxentius (312) and Licinius (324) added the inter-cultural element of conflicting religions to the context of civil war.

For a Christian propagandist like Eusebius of Caesarea, Constantine had to seek God's aid to counter the magic of sorcerers and wizards invoked first by Maxentius and later [[233]] Licinius. Constantine knew superior numbers, better equipment, and even generalship mattered little without God's help. Other pretenders to the purple had trusted multiple gods and failed.³³ But when God sent a revelation to Constantine, worshipping in a prayer tent outside his army's camp, he acted immediately and gained victory (Euseb. *VC* 2.12.1-2). In the end, God delivered both Maxentius and Licinius into Constantine's hands: the former fell at the Milvian Bridge (28 October 312) in a watery slaughter compared to the Egyptian army's obliteration at the Red Sea in Exodus; Licinius' demise marked a victory over both human enemies and demons.³⁴

Constantine attributed his victories to the Christian God in his curious personal letter to the Sasanid Sapor II (October 324?). A *deditio* of the Goths in 332 and a settlement of Sarmatian troubles in 334 demonstrated this God's power outside Roman territory.³⁵ Even the Persian war planned for 337, when Constantine died, would have the Christian trappings of the Emperor's prayer tent and bishops as *comites*.

at the various mid-fourth century sieges of Nisibis in C.S. Lightfoot, Facts and Faction—the Third Siege of Nisibis (A.D. 350), *Historia*, XXXVII, 1988, pp.122, 124 with n.132.

³¹ Weber (*supra* n.19, pp.311-12, 509-10) attributes the absence of *Schlachthelfer* in imperial biographies to a lack of rivalries between gods and religions in Roman warfare before Constantine, but he thinks only in terms of civil wars.

³² Plaut. *Amph.* 231-32; Beard *et al.* (*supra* n.21), p.44; *HA, Avid.* 8.3: *Non sic deos coluimus nec sic vivimus ut ille* [Avidius Cassius] *vinceret*. Despite Cassius' *origo* of Syrian Cyrrhus, any Syrian or Oriental nationalism behind the revolt is baseless: J. Eadie, One Hundred Years of Rebellion: The Eastern Army in Politics, A.D. 175-272, ed. D.L. Kennedy, *The Roman Army in the East, JRA*, Suppl. XVIII, 1996 (Ann Arbor), pp.135-37.

³³ Maxentius: Euseb. *VC* 1.27.1-3, *HE* 8.14.1-5; Licinius: *VC* 2.4.2-4, *HE* 10.8-9.6. Euseb. *VC* 1.27.2-3 on the failure of multiple gods recalls the arguments of earlier Christian apologists. Minucius Felix (*Oct.* 26) noted that Roman reliance on auspices and auguries had led to disasters in the past (*cf.* Cic. *Div.* 2.78-79 on the fate of the Galatian tetrarch Deiotarus, who took auspices before supporting Pompey); Arnobius (*Adv.nat.* 4.4) observed that the same gods supporting the Romans could also fight for their enemies (*cf.* Plautus, *supra* n.32).

³⁴ Maxentius: Euseb. *VC* 1.38, *HE* 9.9.3-9; *Laus Const.* 9.8-9; Licinius: *VC* 2.16.2; *HE* 10.9.4; on the numerous problems of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge see Paschoud, *Zosime* (*supra* n.2), pp.217-21 nn.24-26; W. Kuhoff, Ein Mythos in der römischen Geschichte: Der Sieg Konstantins des Großen über Maxentius vor den Toren Roms am 28. Oktober 312 n. Chr., *Chiron* XXI, 1991, pp.127-74; the Eusebian view of the civil war between Constantine and Licinius as a religious rather than a political struggle is exaggerated: see Helgeland, Christians, pp.809-11.

³⁵ Letter to Sapor II: Euseb. *VC* 4.9-13; for the probable date see Barnes, *Constantine*, pp.258-59 with n.144, and Constantine and the Christians of Persia, *JRS*, LXXV, 1985, p.132; Goths and Sarmatians: *VC* 4.5-6; *cf.* Rufinus *HE* 10.8; Soc. *HE* 1.18; on the campaigns of 332 and 334, which did not produce a *foedus*, and their manipulation for Christian propaganda in Eusebius, see E.L. Wheeler, Constantine's Gothic Treaty of 332: A Reconsideration of Eusebius *VC* 4.5-6, ed. M. Zahariade, *The Roman Frontier at the Lower Danube 4th-6th Centuries*, 1998 (Bucharest), pp.81-94. The scholarly myth of a 332 Gothic treaty is perpetuated in A. Cameron/S.G. Hall, *Eusebius, Life of Constantine*, 1999 (Oxford), pp.311-12; N. Lenski, *Failure of Empire: Valens and the Roman State in the Fourth Century A.D.*, 2002 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), pp.116, 123-23; and R.M. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*, 2006 (Chapel Hill), p.58.

Constantine's supposed concern for Persian Christians (victims of Sasanid persecution only *after* Constantine's death) often overshadows the more pressing *casus belli*: Persian transgression of the Transtigritane territory ceded to Rome in Galerius' Treaty of Nisibis (299) and Sapor II's installation in 336 of a Sasanid on the Armenian throne, a Roman client and sometime province since the time of Pompey, besides a Christian kingdom since 314 (if not 301, the traditional date).³⁶ Whatever Trajanic specter may have haunted Constantine after a "Dacian war" in 332 in planning a "Parthian war" in 337, defense of the Christian faith and its believers did not afford a *casus belli* in conflicts with the Sasanids before the Persian war of 421-422.³⁷

[[234]] For Christians, Constantine heralded a new departure and Eusebius inaugurated a new Christian theology of victory. A sense of "triumphalism," *i.e.*, Romans backed by God's aid could not lose, prevailed in the East until the harsh realities of Muslim victories in the mid-seventh century announced the power of a new god called Allah.³⁸ From the standpoint of the history of Christianity the importance of Constantine's conversion can hardly be disputed, but from the perspective of the role of religion in military operations the turn to Christianity is less dramatic. Assertions implying that Constantine's attribution of his military success to the Christian God represented an innovation require additional nuance and contextualization.³⁹

God(s) as granter(s) of victory is scarcely a new idea in the early fourth century.⁴⁰ New can only be that the divinity was the Christian God. Stripped of Eusebian hyperbole in the *Vita Constantini*, written more than two decades after the Milvian Bridge, the events of 312 and 324 assume a very different character. Constantine's personal convictions lie beyond dispute: his celestial vision in 310 portended his destiny to rule the Empire and by the time of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge the source of this vision, a divinity originally identified as Sol/Apollo, had become in his mind the Christian God. For a convert, however, who had himself baptized only on his deathbed, Constantine's understanding of what Christianity involved—beyond devotion to his Divine Patron—evolved over the last twenty-five years of his life.⁴¹ Conversion of the army, the bureaucracy, and the Empire as a whole involved a cultural-religious-intellectual struggle of over a century. Constantine proceeded slowly. Official recognition in 315 of the victory over Maxentius on Constantine's Arch at Rome noted only *instinctu divinitatis, mentis magnitudine*—language that echoed the anonymous panegyric of 313 delivered at Trier, although the

³⁶ Euseb. *VC* 4.56-57; *cf.* Lyd. *Mag.* 3.33-34; a summary of the Eastern situation in R.C. Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 1992 (Leeds), pp.9-12; see also C. Zuckerman, *Sur la Liste de Vérone et la province de Grande Arménie, la division de l'Empire et la date de création des diocèses*, edd. V. Déroche *et al.*, *Mélanges Gilbert Dagron, TM*, XIV, 2002, pp. 617-37, for a possible Roman annexation of Armenia in 314, although Tiridates III/IV the Great continued on the throne until c.330.

³⁷ See K.G. Holum, *Pulcheria's Crusade and the Ideology of Imperial Victory*, *GRBS*, XVIII, 1977, pp.153-72. Likewise, conversion of the Goths on the lower Danube as a strategic move of Constantine or Constantius II (*e.g.* Whitby, *Deus*, pp.193-94) is greatly exaggerated: see Wheeler (*supra* n.35), pp.87-90.

³⁸ See Heim (*supra* n.11), *passim*; D.M. Olster, *Roman Defeat, Christian Response and the Literary Construction of the Jew*, 1994 (Philadelphia), pp.5, 30-35.

³⁹ Whitby, *Deus*, p.192, and Emperors and Armies, AD 235-395, edd. S. Swain/M. Edwards, *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*, 2004 (Oxford), p.178; note also MacMullen (*supra* n.3), pp.85-86 on a concept of national guardian angels developed (in his view) by Christians and imitated by pagans.

⁴⁰ *Cf.* *Corp.Herm.* 18.8-9, in A.D. Nock/A.-J. Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum*, 1945-54 (Paris), II, pp.251-52; H. Drake, *In Praise of Constantine: A Historical Study and New Translation of Eusebius' Tricennial Orations*, 1976 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), p.169 n.12; Fears (*supra* n.13); literature in *supra* nn.4-5.

⁴¹ For these issues see P. Weiss, *The Vision of Constantine*, tr. A.R. Birley, *JRA*, XVI, 2003, pp.237-59 with bibliography; *cf.* Weber (*supra* n.19), pp.274-94; S. Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum von den Severen bis zu Constantin I. (193-337 n. Chr.)*, *Historia Einzelschriften*, CLXXXV, 2004 (Stuttgart), pp.157-58. There is little evidence that Constantius I was a devotee of Sol: M.D. Smith, *The Religion of Constantius I*, *GRBS*, XXXVIII, 1997, pp.197-208. Harris (*supra* n.29, pp.492-94) would replace Constantine's celestial "vision" with a contrived dream.

panegyrist circumspectly abandoned names of specific pagan gods for vague references to *quisnam deus*, *divinum numen*, etc.⁴² Sol on Constantine's coins continued into the mid 320s and a *signifer* with an image of Sol appears on the Arch of Constantine.⁴³

[[235]] Moreover, the army had seen emperors change their preferred gods before—from Aurelian's devotion to Sol Invictus in 272 to Diocletian's emphasis on Jupiter and Hercules.⁴⁴ Constantine did not disturb traditional military cults and practices within army camps. Like other non-traditional cults his prayer tent lay outside the *castra*, as did Christian observances for Christian soldiers and non-believers among the troops.⁴⁵ Christian Sunday, superimposed on an already established *dies Solis*, scarcely added a new holiday to the Roman army's religious calendar and reflected Constantine's own amalgamation of the worship of Sol and Christianity, although granting Christian soldiers leave to attend church was an innovation.⁴⁶ The new obligatory common prayer for non-Christians on Sunday refers obscurely to a divinity and its performance with upraised hands and gaze to the sky may also reflect worship of Sol. A vague monotheism in collective shouts and acclamations remained the norm in the army through the fourth century, although Constantine's discharged veterans still prayed to gods for the emperor's safety.⁴⁷ Decades later, even the conviction of the pious Theodosius I could be tested: expecting from Christian counselors a bloodless victory at the Frigidus (5-6 September 394), he cried out as the prospect of real fighting on the engagement's first day loomed: *Ubi est Theodosii deus*? Despite Christian commentary to the contrary, the statement implies the Christian God as still one deity among many in Theodosius' mind.⁴⁸

⁴² ILS 694; *Pan.Lat.* 12 (9).11.4 (*divino monitus instinctu*) with Nixon's commentary in C.E.V. Nixon/B.S. Rodgers, *In Praise of Later Roman Emperors: The Panegyrici Latini*, 1994 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), pp.292-93, 312 n.76; cf. Weiss (*supra* n.41), pp.250-51, 259 on Constantine's own use of *summus deus*.

⁴³ Coins: Barnes, *Constantine*, p.48 with nn.47-48; cf. R. MacMullen's just skepticism of Barnes' view that the continuation of Sol on the coins represents only the inertia of mint officials: *Christianizing the Roman Empire*, 1984 (New Haven), p.44 with n.4; see esp. on Constantine and the Sol coinage Berrens (*supra* n.41), pp.150-62, 165-67 and 200 with n.272 (*signifer* with Sol).

⁴⁴ Cf. P. Barceló, *Die Macht des Kaisers—Die Macht Gottes: Alleinherrschaft und Monotheismus in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, ed., *id.*, *Contra quis ferat arma deos? Vier Augsburger Vorträge zur Religionsgeschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit*, 1996 (Munich), pp. 84-93.

⁴⁵ On the observance of non-traditional cults outside the *castra*, see A.S. Hoey, Official Policy towards Oriental Cults in the Roman Army, *TAPA*, LXX, 1939, pp.456-81, followed by Helgeland, *Christians*, p.813, but qualified by Nock (*HTR*, p.200), Speidel (*supra* n.24, p.50 n.160), and Stoll (*Integration*, p.127); Euseb. *VC* 2.12.1; 4.18.3-19. Note also D.S. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War c. 300-1215*, 2003 (Woodbridge), p.18, citing Zos. 2.29; but cf. Paschoud, *Zosime* (*supra* n.2), pp.238-40 n.39. Constantine prohibited animal sacrifices by provincial governors and praetorian praefects (Euseb. *VC* 2.44), which some would apply by analogy to the army: R. Haensch, *La christianisation de l'armée romaine*, edd. Y. Le Bohec/C. Wolff, *L'Armée romaine de Dioclétien à Valentinien I^{er}*, 2004 (Lyon/Paris), p.528, although these officials in Constantine's day were no longer part of the army and epigraphical and archaeological evidence at military sites on the Rhine and Danube attests the continuation of pagan cults into the late fourth century. See A.D. Lee, *The Army*, *CAH²*, XIII, 1998 (Cambridge), p.227 with n.101.

⁴⁶ Euseb. *VC* 4.18.3-19; on the creation of Christian Sunday, probably in 321, see Cameron/Hall (*supra* n.35), pp.317-18, who note that leave for church attendance may have applied only to the garrison at Constantinople. This provision would thus date 330-337.

⁴⁷ Euseb. *VC* 4.19-20; the prayer may actually originate with Licinius: Lact. *Mort.Pers.* 46.3-11; Cameron/Hall (*supra* n.35), p.318; Helgeland, *Christians*, p.808-809; discharged veterans: *C.Th.* 7.20.2: *dei te nobis servant*, although either the date (320) or the place (Gaul) must be wrong: see Tomlin (*supra* n.13), p.46 n.70; monotheistic acclamations: MacMullen (*supra* n.43), pp.45-46 with n.10. Priests and deacons for individual units, attributed to Constantine by Sozomen (*HE* 1.8), are attested only from the early fifth century in literary sources (Tomlin, *supra* n.13, p.27 with n.54), but a papyrus fragment of distributions of *annona militaris* may push that date back into the fourth century: *P.Med.* I 70 with E.L. Wheeler (n.81 *infra*), forthcoming; cf. Haensch (*supra* n.45), p.526 with n.11, who has more confidence in Sozomen's accuracy than I.

⁴⁸ Ambr. *Obit.Theod.* 7 with J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose of Milan, Political Letters and Speeches*, 2005 (Liverpool), p.181 n.3; Rufinus, *HE* 11.33, gives Theodosius' question a slightly different context; on the Battle of the Frigidus see the acta

Problematic, however, is the fate of the *signa militaria*, venerated in the camps as *genii*, but also the signals of commands for tactical movements on the battlefield. Abolition of the cult of the *signa* would have been too drastic for 312: the *signa* were too intertwined with legionary identity to be banished by fiat, although the silence of the sources indicates their **[[236]]** eventual disappearance with more of a whimper than a bang. Only a single *labarum*, that *vexillum* bearing an encircled six-pointed star recalling Constantine's vision of 310, existed in 312.⁴⁹ Eusebius clearly indicates that, like the *chi-rho* on Constantine's helmet and the supposed *chi-rho* on soldiers' shields, proliferation of *labara* to replace the gold images (*signa*, *aquillae*, or *imagines*?) that led the army belonged to the period after 312.⁵⁰ In the conflict with Licinius, Eusebius attributes miraculous powers to the *labarum* and describes this new standard in terms borrowed from the vocabulary of magic, thus suggesting its dissemination in the period 321-324. Clearly Eusebius sought to present the Christian God via the *labarum* as the Roman army's new *Schlachthelfer*, although whether and when all tactical *signa* and the legionary *aquillae* were replaced is another matter. This problem would merit an independent investigation.⁵¹

To the largely pagan and barbarian army of 312 that defeated Maxentius, Constantine's superficial efforts at Christianization (a new god closely associated with the known Sol and some new rituals to observe) did not sharply depart from previous practices.⁵² Withdrawal of Christians from military service in 303, the subsequent persecution of believers from that point, and the continuation of religious traditions in the camps better account for the army's paganism in 312 than the rural origin of recruits, for despite the lack of material evidence for Christian soldiers in some regions, a good number of Christians (precise figures are elusive) probably served in the army during the third century.⁵³

published by R. Bratoz, *Westillyricum und Nordostitalien in der spätrömischen Zeit*, 1996 (Ljubljana), with F. Paschoud, Pour un mille six centième anniversaire: le Frigidus en ébullition, *AnTard*, V, 1997, pp.275-80.

⁴⁹ On the *labarum*, a Celtic word, and its original depiction of the star (later morphed into the *chi-rho* Christogram), see Weiss (*supra* n.41), pp.254-55.

⁵⁰ Euseb. *VC* 1.31.2-3; 4.21; gold *imagines*: *ILS* 2381; gold *aquillae*: Dexippus, *FGrH* 100 fr.6.2; cf. *Hdn.* 4.7.7; for a view of only limited use of the *chi-rho* on soldiers' shields, see Tomlin (*supra* n.13), pp.25-26.

⁵¹ Euseb. *VC* 2.6.2-7, 8.1-10.2 16.1; magical vocabulary: Heim (*supra* n.11), p.99; the *labarum* first appears on coins in 326: Lee (*supra* n.45), p.226 with n.94, although Helgeland (Christians, p.815) and Haensch (*supra* n.45, p.528) seem to believe in Constantine's whole-scale replacement of the *signa*. Julian abolished the *labarum* (*Soz. HE* 5.17) and little more is heard of it, although Jerome in 403 (*Ep.* 107.2) describes a *vexillum* with Christian symbols similar to the *labarum*. Vegetius' Christianization of the *sacramentum* (2.5.3-5 Reeve) does not extend to the *signa*: the legionary *aquila* is retained as well as the *imagines imperatorum* as *divina et praesentia signa* (2.6.2; 3.5.8; cf. 2.7.3, 5 on *aquiliferi* and *imaginarii vel imaginiferi*): proof that the emperor's Christian role as God's vice-gerent did not affect his own divine status; cf. E.L. Wheeler, rev. of Stäcker (*supra* n.1), *BMCR* (<http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/bmcr/>) 2004.06.27 at n.9. The only change noted in Vegetius is the replacement of *signiferi* with *draconarii* (2.7.5), which has no known Christian significance. Use of *dracones* in the Roman army dates from at least 136 (*Arr. Tact.* 35.2-5). Extremely ornate *dracones* were displayed in Constantius II's *adventus* at Rome in 357: *Amm.* 16.10.7. Indeed by the Late Empire *dracones* seem ubiquitous in the armies both of Rome and her opponents. See *infra*, text at nn.198-203. Similarly, *Deus nobiscum* supplemented but did not replace other battle cries: *Veg.* 3.5.4. Ambrose (*De fide* 2.142) on the abandonment of the *aquillae* would seem to contradict Vegetius, but it is not clear how literally the good bishop's claim can be taken, since Vegetius was also a Christian. Indeed at 3.8.15 Vegetius still writes about the *signa*: *nihil est venerabilis eorum maiestate militibus*. Tomlin's attempt to impugn Vegetius (*supra* n.13, pp.26-27 with n.48) for omission of the *labarum* and antiquarian retention of the *aquila* is not convincing, particularly as the use of the *labarum* after Julian is not clear.

⁵² Barbarian element: J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom*, 1990 (Oxford), pp.7-8; a pagan army in 312: MacMullen (*supra* n.43), pp.44-45, rejecting Barnes' view (*Constantine*, p.48), for a Christian army from 312.

⁵³ The view of rural recruitment as a prop for paganism (Whitby, *Deus*, p.192; Tomlin, *supra* n.13, p.32) goes back at least to S. Mazarino, *Aspetti sociali del quarto secolo*, 1951 (Rome), p.258; cf. MacMullen (*supra* n.43), p.44 with n.6; few Christian soldiers and no evidence (except Tertullian) for Christians in the African army: Le Bohec (*supra* n.27), pp.571-72, and *The Roman Imperial Army*, 1994 (New York), pp.251 with nn.103-105, p.257 with n.31; the case for Christian soldiers: Nock, *HTR*,

[[237]] Change at the top had to have effects below, but ambiguity prevailed for decades. Julian, although confident that his Gallic troops brought East to fight the Persians were both battle-tested and properly pagan, still felt compelled to attend church at Vienne on Epiphany in 361 to please Christian elements.⁵⁴ Libanius justified Julian's excessive sacrifices and monetary incentives to his army the following year at Antioch as a means not only to raise morale after defeats, but also to win over the Christians in Constantius II's army: military failures against the Sasanids resulted from fighting under the wrong gods. Nevertheless, Libanius' exploitation of the *topos* of lax discipline in the Eastern army raises doubts: Western units of *auxilia palatina*, the Petulantes and Celtae, displayed poor discipline rather than Eastern forces. Ammianus ignored any effort to convert Christian soldiers to paganism and Ephrem Syrus thought Constantius' army was pagan.⁵⁵

As generally agreed, throughout the fourth century the army remained rather indifferent to Christian-pagan disputes—debates current outside rather than inside the *castra*.⁵⁶ What name an emperor attached to the ambiguous monotheistic deity set in place by Constantine probably mattered less to the bulk of the army than victory, a commander's charisma, and his ability to inspire confidence in his generalship.⁵⁷ From this perspective the divine gift of victory passed to the army through the general or emperor and his relationship to a particular deity.

But can pagan religion as a motivating factor for soldiers be discounted in the era before 312 and Christianity as a new motivating factor after 312 be asserted?⁵⁸ As already noted, the idea of victory as a divine gift long antedates 312, Christianity as a *casus belli* in foreign wars begins only in the fifth century, and Constantine's conversion only minimally affected the army's religious observances. Eusebius' attribution of miraculous powers to the *labarum* and his tales of portents signifying Constantine's later victory over Licinius imitated pagan practices, just as the *miracula* of Christian holy men, whether alive or dead, to defend besieged cities substituted Christian wonders for the powers of pagan deities as patrons. These Christian military miracles belong predominately to the Theodosian era and later.⁵⁹ Few [[238]] fourth-century soldiers probably read Eusebius' *Vita Constantini* and any

pp.223-25; Helgeland, *Christians*, pp.733-97, although probably not sufficiently critical of martyr acts; M.B. Simmons, *Arnobius of Sicca: Religious Conflict and Competition in the Age of Diocletian*, 1995 (Oxford), pp.40-46; and esp. Tomlin, pp.23-24, emphasizing Euseb. *HE* 8.4.2 and particularly Tert. *De corona* 1.1-4. New epigraphical texts from Asia Minor showing soldiers' advertisement of their Christianity before the fourth century are now known: see Thomas Drew-Bear's paper in this volume.

⁵⁴ Jul. *Op.* 415C (=Ep. 8 Wright, Ep. 26 Bidez-Cumont); Lib. *Or.* 18.166; church: Amm. 21.2.4-5.

⁵⁵ Lib. *Or.* 18.166-69; Amm. 22.12.6; Ephrem Syr. *C. Iulianum* 3.8-11, in S.N.C. Lieu, *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic*², 1989 (Liverpool), p.119; E.L. Wheeler, *The Laxity of Syrian Legions*, ed. D. Kennedy (*supra* n.32), pp.248, 252. The Sasanid tradition preserved in Tabari presents Julian's army as Christian and only feigning pagan beliefs under Julian: T. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sasaniden*, 1879/1973 (Leiden), p.62.

⁵⁶ Nock, *HTR*, pp.226-28, following H. Muller, *Christians and Pagans from Constantine to Augustine*, 1946 (Pretoria); the view is not original with Tomlin (*supra* n.13), pp.29-30, followed by Whitby (*supra* n.39), pp.175-76. See also Clauss (*supra* n.28), coll.1105-106; Bachrach (*supra* n.45), p.11; Lee (*supra* n.45), p.228.

⁵⁷ The army's attitude c.180 is well expressed at *Passio SS. Scillitanorum* 3, cited by Nock, *HTR*, p.227 n.158: *et nos religiosi sumus et simplex est religio nostra et iuramus per genium domini nostri imperatoris et pro salute eius supplicamus*. Cf. Tomlin (*supra* n.13), pp.29-30.

⁵⁸ Sic Whitby, *Deus*, pp.192-93 with some qualifications.

⁵⁹ Euseb. *VC* 2.6.1-7, 8.1-10.2, 16.1; but note Delehay's remarks (*supra* n.7, pp.113-14) that saints as protectors of cities were not continuations of pagan cults: "Dans ce sens restreint, un martyr célèbre est toujours l'héritier d'un dieu; mais il n'en est pas nécessairement le transformation, et son culte n'est pas pour cela la continuation d'un culte idolâtrique." Whitby's catalogue of Christian military *miracula* (*Deus*, pp.194-99) nearly all date to the age of Theodosius I or later; the exception, Constantius II's apparition at the siege of Nisibis (350), may be only tangentially Christian and reflect the idea of the emperor as *soter*: see Lightfoot (*supra* n.30), p.122; for similar catalogues see MacMullen (*supra* n.3), pp.81-84; McCormack (*supra* n.8), *passim*; and the classic study of Baynes (*supra* n.12), pp.248-60.

concerted effort of the Christian Church to devise mechanisms for prediction and delivery of victory would have required more Christian unity than existed throughout most of the fourth century. The God-sent wind on the second day of the Battle of the Frigidus marks a point of departure for the proliferation of Christian military miracles in the fifth century and later, the age of Christianity's triumph, when attributions of Divine causation were extended to every event or accident.⁶⁰

Even less satisfactory is a rejection of religion as a motivating factor in battle based upon an absence of religious emphasis (especially pre-battle speeches) in Caesar and Ammianus and an interpretation of the Ps.-Maurice. Caesar, *pontifex maximus* from 63 B.C., could hardly ignore religious practices (see *infra*), even if he does not emphasize them in the *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile*. Ammianus, notorious for selectivity in his narrative and, despite his military experience, not quite as good a source for the fourth-century army as generally supposed, scorned Christian elements in the army. Analysing the motivation of soldiers, pagan or Christian, was not part of his agenda, although a vague celestial deity both inspired Julian's troops and is given some credit for the outcome of the victory at Strasbourg.⁶¹ If the Ps.-Maurice rejects the soldiers' shouting "Deus nobiscum" during a charge, this prohibition has nothing to do with religion, but rather aims at maintenance of order in the ranks. The troops were religiously prepared before leaving camp and on the way to the point of deployment.⁶²

Romans never fought as religious fanatics; martyrdom and punishment of non-believers *qua* infidels had no role in Roman warfare. But belief in divine aid and the superiority of Roman gods cannot be totally discounted as a factor in battlefield motivation. Maintenance of a right relationship with the gods, a *pax deorum*, was a basic tenet of Roman religion. Moreover, although some argue that the *interpretatio Romana* relieved Rome of the need for a **[[239]] Religionspolitik**,⁶³ destruction of an enemy's cult sites and monuments was at times an integral part of Roman offensives (see Part II). Some assessment of religion in the army is essential to appreciate to what extent Roman wars involved battles of the gods.

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The War Scroll from Qumran, a military manual for the apocalyptic battle of the people of God against Satan and his allies, the Kittim (Romans?), leaves little doubt to the extent of religion's role. All power is acknowledged to come from God and not the soldiers (1QM 11.4-5); the unclean must be banished from camp to accommodate the presence of Angels (7.6); God is invoked and the enemy's gods

⁶⁰ Cf. Olster (*supra* n.38), p.5.

⁶¹ Whitby, *Deus*, pp.193-94; Strasbourg: Amm. 16.12.13, 52; 18.3.1; Heim (*supra* n.11), pp.227; on Ammianus and religion see now T.D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality*, 1998 (Ithaca/London), pp.79-94, esp. 90-91 on equation of Christian prayer with military incompetence. Whitby takes D. Lee's face-of-battle attempt to analyze factors of morale in the Roman army (Morale and the Roman Experience of Battle, ed. A.B. Lloyd, *Battle in Antiquity*, 1996, London, pp.199-217) as somehow definitive. Whitby *infers* from Lee's failure to discuss religious factors that none existed. *Non sequitur!* For the foibles of the face-of-battle approach see E.L. Wheeler, Battles and Frontiers, *JRA*, XI, 1998, pp.644-50, Firepower: Missile Weapons and the "Face of Battle," ed. E. Dabrowa, *Roman Military Studies, Electrum*, V, 2001 (Cracow), pp.169-84, and (from an historiographical perspective) Introduction, ed. *id.*, *The Armies of Classical Greece*, 2007 (Aldershot/Burlington), pp.xix-xxiii.

⁶² Ps.-Maurice 2.18; 7.B.16.10-13 Dennis; Byzantine religious practices; see literature in n.100 *infra*; cf. Veg. 3.5.4 (*supra* n.51), where the *Deus nobiscum* is not yet exclusively the Roman army's battle cry. Whitby (*Deus*, p.193 n.17) rightly raises his voice in the chorus of those rejecting M.H. Hansen's skepticism about pre-battle speeches: The Battle Exhortation in Ancient Historiography. Fact or Fiction? *Historia*, XLII, 1993, pp.161-80; likewise *contra*, M. Clark, Did Thucydides Invent the Battle Exhortation? *Historia*, XLIV, 1995, pp.375-76; C. Ehrhardt, Speeches before Battle," *Historia*, XLIV, 1995, pp. 120-21; W.K. Pritchett, *Ancient Greek Battle Speeches and a Palfrey*, 2002 (Amsterdam); *pro*, A.K. Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 BC-AD 200*, 1996 (Oxford), pp.146-47. In light of this debate it is interesting that Napoleon doubted the efficacy of pre-battle speeches: Maxim LXI, in Lt.-Gen. Sir George C. D'Aquilar, *The Military Maxims of Napoleon*, ed. D. Chandler, 1987 (London), p.75.

⁶³ Nock, *HTR*, p.206, citing Liv. 42.3.9: *tamquam non iidem ubique di immortales sint*; cf. Rüpke, p.152.

cursed (14.16, 13.1-5); pre-battle speeches boost morale (10.2-8, 15.6-16, 16.13-17.9); and trumpets, banners, arms, and missiles bear inscriptions of God's presence (3-6).⁶⁴ Romans cannot match in detail the extent of these preparations for a holy war, but comparison is not irrelevant. A brief review of the evidence for Roman sacrifices, priests, watchwords, battle cries, and *vota* inscriptions can permit an evaluation of religious factors in Roman battle preparations, particularly in view of a supposed decline in religious practices in the Late Republic.⁶⁵

As sacrifice constituted a system of communication between gods and men, one could hardly expect Caesar as *pontifex maximus* to omit them, even if the *corpus Caesarianum* pays little attention to religious factors in Roman warfare.⁶⁶ The prelude to Pharsalus (48 B.C.) included Caesar's *lustratio* of his army and an accompanying sacrifice (not specified as a *suovetaurilia*), besides an additional sacrifice to Mars and Venus Genetrix at midnight on the day of the battle and prayers to the gods as he deployed his forces. Pompey likewise sacrificed the same night.⁶⁷ A run-away victim at a sacrifice before Caesar's departure for Africa in late 47 B.C. brought dire warnings from an *haruspex*, but did not delay departure for the Thapsus campaign against Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio and Cato Minor.⁶⁸ Caesar used stratagem to deter the effects of prophecies that a Scipio could not be defeated in Africa, just as his quick wit turned the bad omen of his stumble at disembarkation in Africa into a positive reinforcement of morale—a talent he also used to counter unfavorable sacrifices on other occasions. Caesar's *lustratio* of the army on 21 March 46 B.C. preceded his movements before the battle at Thapsus. Later, at Munda (45 B.C.) Caesar appealed to the gods at a critical juncture to rally his faltering troops.⁶⁹ Far from neglecting religion, Caesar employed it to his advantage without falsification, as divine portents are subject to human interpretation. Nor did the next round of civil war neglect religion: the opposing armies at Philippi (42 B.C.) both scrupulously performed a *lustratio* before battle.⁷⁰

[[240]] Of course the objection can be raised that rituals as routines do not signify genuine belief. A *lustratio* of the army with its accompanying *suovetaurilia* regularly marked the departure of the army from Rome, re-concentration of an army temporarily scattered, the arrival of a new commander, and the initiation of operations or the enlargement of ongoing operations.⁷¹ The only *lustratio* of Caesar's army during the Gallic wars is noted by Hirtius (*BG* 8.52.1) and occurs precisely after Caesar's re-concentration of all his forces in the territory of the Treveri, when they are placed under the command of T. Labienus just before Caesar's departure for Italy to begin the civil war with Pompey.

Less clear are performance of these rites as a requisite for offensives in non-Roman territory and the interpretation of the *lustratio* as an act of purification. River crossings (including transgressions of the *limes* in the period from Augustus on) as sacred acts requiring auspices or renewal of auspices belonged

⁶⁴ S. Weitzman, *Surviving Sacrilege: Cultural Persistence in Jewish Antiquity*, 2005 (Cambridge, Mass.), pp.125-26; G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*³, 1987 (London), pp.103-25.

⁶⁵ Cf. *supra* text at nn.16-22, 63.

⁶⁶ Helgeland, *Army*, p.1471; cf. Suet. *Iul.* 59: *ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absterritus unquam vel retardatus est.*

⁶⁷ Caesar: Plut. *Caes.* 43.3-4, 44.1; App. *BC* 2.281; Pompey: App. *BC* 2.283.

⁶⁸ Suet. *Iul.* 59; Cic. *Div.* 2.52.

⁶⁹ Stratagem; Suet. *Iul.* 59; Plut. *Caes.* 52.4-6; Dio 42.57.5-58.1; stumble: Suet. *Iul.* 59; Front. *Strat.* 1.12.2; Dio 42.58.2-3; sacrifices: Suet. *Iul.* 77; Polyæn. *Strat.* 8.23.32-33; Thapsus: *BAfr.* 75.1; Munda: App. *BC* 2.431; cf. *Caes. BG* 4.25.3.

⁷⁰ Plut. *Brut.* 39.1-3; App. *BC* 4.563. The nature of Octavian's sacrifice at the siege of Perusia (winter 41-40 B.C.), when hungry Antonians made a sally and captured the victims, is not clear: Suet. *Aug.* 96.2.

⁷¹ References collected by Rüpke, pp.144-45, who stresses the *lustratio* as a routine act.

to the antiquarian tradition and lacked practical observance from the first century B.C., as Cicero attests.⁷² Lucullus (69 B.C.) sacrificed a bull *after* he crossed the Euphrates to celebrate his successful passage. The nature of his later sacrifice before crossing the Armenian Arsianus River during his aborted march toward Artaxata after the victory at Tigranocerta is not clear. Likewise, Sulla sacrificed at the Cephissus River in the maneuvers before Chaeronea (86 B.C.) for uncertain reasons. If the butterfingers P. Licinius Crassus dropped the entrails at the apparent *lustratio* before crossing the Euphrates at Zeugma (53 B.C.), the scenes of the *suovetaurilia* on Trajan's Column all occur *north* of the Danube, as does the only *suovetaurilia* on the Aurelian Column.⁷³ L. Vitellius' *suovetaurilia* in 36 preceded his demonstration in force into Parthian territory to initiate the installation of Tiridates (grandson of Phraates IV) on the Parthian throne—hardly the major offensive some claim. Vitellius' performance of the rite signaled the initiation of a campaign (rather than a river crossing) and (as a Roman *pièce de théâtre*?) balanced Tiridates' Zoroastrian sacrifice of a horse before crossing the Euphrates. The *hostia* that escaped from Caesennius Paetus, when he crossed the Euphrates into Armenia with III Scythica and XII Fulminata in 62, was intended for the dedication of his winter camp, not for auspices connected with the river crossing. Domitius Corbulo's *lustratio* at Melitene in 63 symbolized the opening of a new campaign with a newly assembled army under a *dux* with *maius imperium* (or its equivalent). Crossing the Euphrates into Sophene and Armenia Maior, Roman clients, whose Parthian occupation Rome did not recognize, did not mean leaving Roman territory.⁷⁴ Finally, the distance slab of the Antonine Wall at Bridgeness on the Firth of [[241]] Forth, illustrating a *suovetaurilia* of the II Augusta, may celebrate the initial undertaking of building the Wall rather than the end of a Caledonian campaign. The Wall was built from Bridgeness westward and this sacrifice generally denotes a beginning, not an end.⁷⁵

Equation of the *lustratio* with purification chiefly rests on καθαρός (*vel sim.*) in Greek authors to designate the rite.⁷⁶ Onasander's emphasis (5) on starting a campaign with a purified army scarcely supports this equation, as he does not explicitly refer to the circumambulation of a *lustratio* or the

⁷² *Suovetaurilia* as a prerequisite for crossing the *limes*: Le Bohec (*supra* n.53), p.238; Cic. *Div.* 2.77: *nec amnis transeunt auspiciato*; on river crossings see Rüpke, p.147; Scheid (*supra* n.21), pp.231-32, 237-38, on rites before river crossings on the Aurelian Column (e.g. Scene LXXV=Scheid/Huet, *supra* n.21, p.380, Fig. 93).

⁷³ Lucullus: Plut. *Luc.* 24.7, 31.5; Sulla: Plut. *Sull.* 17.3; Crassus: Plut. *Crass.* 19.6; Lepper/Frere, pp.58-59, 91, 157 with pls. X, XXXVIII, LXXVI, who appear desperate in asserting that the sacrifices occur on Roman territory, albeit recently occupied Dacian land. In any case, no known *lustratio* occurred before crossing the Danube. It is clear from the Column's scenes that the procession of *lustratio* takes place outside the army camp, but the sacrifice inside it. A *lustratio* inside a camp was not prohibited on sacral grounds, although such could be considered a sign of cowardice: Dio 47.38.4; Rüpke, p.145. Aurelian Column: Scheid (*supra* n.21), pp.229-30 with Fig. 48 (Scene XXX), who correctly notes that Scenes VI and XIII (Figs. 17, 31) are too poorly preserved to permit interpretation.

⁷⁴ Vitellius: Tac. *Ann.* 6.37.2; cf. C.R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study*, 1994, p.23: a gross exaggeration of Vitellius' intentions; Paetus: Tac. *Ann.* 15.7.2; Corbulo: Tac. *Ann.* 15.25.2-26.3. Stoll (*Integration*, p.203 n.331) erroneously puts Paetus' crossing of the Euphrates at Zeugma, which would situate his army in Osroene rather than Armenia, as Tacitus clearly indicates. On the peculiar status of Sophene in the Roman period, see E.L. Wheeler, *Southwestern Armenia as a Roman Frontier: Sophene 188 B.C.-299 A.D.*, ed. R.G. Hovannisian, *Armenian Tsopk/Kharper, Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces*, 3, 2002 (Costa Mesa, CA), pp.87-122, esp. pp.106-20.

⁷⁵ *RIB* 2139; G. MacDonald, *The Building of the Antonine Wall: A Fresh Study of the Inscriptions*, *JRS*, XI, 1921, pp.13-14 with Pl. 1, followed by D.J. Breeze/B. Dobson, *Hadrian's Wall*³, 1987 (London), p.95; a close-up photograph of the *lustratio* scene at D.J. Breeze, *The Antonine Wall*, 2006 (Edinburgh), p.23, Fig. 2.3.

⁷⁶ E.g. Plutarch, Appian, and Dio in *supra* nn.67, 70; cf. Le Bohec (*supra* n.53), p.239. The *suovetaurilia* was dedicated to Mars, although the only evidence comes from the context of a *devotio* (Liv.8.10.14): if the spear of the general who devoted himself should fall into the enemy's hands, a *suovetaurilia* must serve as *piaculum*. A *lustratio agri* was also to Mars: Cato *RR* 139.

suovetaurilia. The Hellenic character of his treatise often intrudes on his attempt to be Roman.⁷⁷ Rather than a ritual of purification, the encircling process of the *lustratio* may essentially be an act defining the body of troops to be protected by the gods—a procedure creating cohesion of the army and thus apropos to a ritual and sacrifice associated with beginnings.⁷⁸ *Lustratio* as a morale booster? As in modern religions, ritual as routine can produce skepticism and boredom in some or be a source of strength for believers. Generalizations are hazardous.

The *lustratio* of an army, like other official religious acts, fell to the responsibility of a general in his dual function as magistrate, whose duties included priestly acts. Priesthoods at Rome belonged to the prerogative of senatorial amateurs, not divinely inspired shamans or highly trained devotees of a particular cult based at a specific temple, as in the Near East. Such specialists and technicians were not required for sacrifices, but might be present as consultants to aid interpretation of the results when divination was involved. Other religious functionaries (e.g., *victimarius*, *antistes/antistius/aedituus*, *turanius*), not directly involved with divination, are widely attested in the army,⁷⁹ but not divination specialists. Not all sacrifices, it should be recalled, involved divination.

Through divination generals shared responsibility for decisions with the gods and thus avoided subsequent charges of rash conduct or cowardice.⁸⁰ Except for augurs, who belonged to one of the four senatorial colleges of priests, divination specialists, such as *pullarii*, *marsi*, and *haruspices*, operated in the private sphere. *Pullarii*, keepers of the sacred chickens and prominent in the Middle Republic, accompanied Republican armies either as minor bureaucratic staff among the *apparitores* or as *comites* of a general. Cicero noted (*Div.* 2.77) that generals had ceased to employ chickens for propitious plucking (as opposed to culinary delights). A rank of *pullarius* in the Imperial army is a myth. Likewise, the *marsi*, snake charmers and occult herbalists, are best seen as medical personnel in the army at Lambaesis of the Severan era rather than diviners for campaigns—a function for which even Republican evidence is lacking. Nor do the various *sacerdotes* of oriental or pseudo-oriental cults appear in the army as rankers *qua* “priests” or involve themselves with operational decisions, although they might be present with the army and a soldier could simultaneously serve in the army and be the priest of a cult. Evidence from Dura-Europos and Coptos, speciously contrary to this view, is highly problematic.⁸¹

Haruspices conform to this profile. Just as other religious advisers (see Part II), they better fit in the entourage of a governor or emperor as *comites*, the role in which Onasander envisions them.⁸² Indeed, like

⁷⁷On Onasander see D. Ambaglio, Il trattato “Sul comandante” di Onosandro, *Athenaeum*, LIX, 1981, pp.353-77; cf. Y. Le Bohec, Que voulait Onesandros? edd. Y. Burnand/Y. Le Bohec/J.-P. Martin, *Claude de Lyon, Empereur Romain*, 1998 (Paris), pp.169-79 (reasserting the treatise’s Roman content), and C.J. Smith, Onasander on How to be a General, edd. Austin *et al.* (*supra* n.1), pp.151-66: a most curious attempt to understand Onasander philosophically. Nothing can be argued from Onasander’s chapter titles, since both the titles and the work’s divisions are Byzantine: see W. Peters, *Untersuchungen zu Onasander*, diss.Berlin, 1972, p.13; cf. p.212: the purification of the army inspired by Macedonian practice.

⁷⁸ See Rüpke, pp.145-46, followed by Scheid (*supra* n.21), p.236; cf. D. S. Crespo, Il faut s’allier avant la bataille. Sur certaines pratiques “sacrificielles” face au danger, *RHR*, CCXV, 1998, pp.195-216. For Stolle (*Integration*, pp.203 n.331, 213) the *lustratio* is still a purification.

⁷⁹ References collected by R. Haensch, *Pagane Priester des römischen Heeres im 3. Jahrhundert nach Christus*, edd., L. de Blois/P. Funke/J. Hahn, *The Impact of Imperial Rome on Religions, Ritual and Religious Life in the Roman Empire*, 2006 (Leiden), p.209 with n.4.

⁸⁰ Liebeschuetz (*supra* n.17), p.11.

⁸¹ For all these issues see my *Pullarii, Marsi, Haruspices, and Sacerdotes in the Roman Imperial Army*, edd. V. Hirschmann, A. Kriekhaus, M. Schellenberg, *A Roman Miscellany: Essays in Honour of Anthony R. Birley on his Seventieth Birthday*, 2008 (Gdansk), pp.185-201; a different view in B. Palme, *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri*, XXIV: *Griecische Text*, XVII, 2002 (Vienna), pp.95-97, and esp. Haensch (*supra* n.79), pp.208-18.

⁸² Onas. 10.25; Rüpke, pp.149, 249.

the *marsi*, a flurry of Severan *haruspices* epigraphically attested at Lambaesis remains an isolated phenomenon. They rank at the bottom of the *principales* and belong to the *officium* of the Numidian governor. Other *haruspices* alleged to be in the army (including the Praetorians and other urban corps) are phantoms.⁸³ This traditional form of divination, however, survived into the fourth century. Constantine consulted an *haruspex* (not in the army) before his invasion of Italy in 312 and like Caesar in 47 B.C. successfully ignored dire predictions. He banned private use of *haruspices* in 313, but retained them for public purposes.⁸⁴

The efficacy of an *haruspex*'s divination to promote morale and the *gregarius miles*' belief in the gods' support for military action lies in the same ambiguity as the rites of *lustratio* and the *suovetaurilia*. Frontinus, an experienced commander writing his *Strategemata* under Domitian, and Polyaeus, trying to advise Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus on generalship during the Parthian war of 161-166, both thought Greek exempla of this type of divination valuable for morale. Diocletian also took the advice of *haruspices* seriously, for the failure to obtain suitable omens at Antioch in 299 in the presence of some Christian soldiers set in motion the so-called "Great Persecution" in 303.⁸⁵

Although less discussed than the *haruspex*'s divination, augury during the Principate continued in practice. *Augurale* became a synonym for the general's tent or residence.⁸⁶ At [[243]] some point between Domitian and Marcus Aurelius the Ps.-Hyginus authored a treatise on Roman marching camps. He specifies the construction of an *auguratorium* on the right side of the forum in front of the *praetorium* and directly on the *via principalis*; the camp's tribunal for announcing the results of such augury would be situated in a corresponding position on the left side of the forum. Ps.-Hyginus' *auguratorium* finds no parallel in either Polybius' description of a marching camp or the excavations of permanent legionary camps.⁸⁷ As the Ps.-Hyginus has become somewhat of a *vade mecum* in analysis of army camps, his *auguratorium* cannot be easily dismissed as a theorist's fantasy. Hence the puzzling absence of this *auguratorium* in permanent legionary camps leads to speculation: incorporation of the *auguratorium* in the *principia*? abandonment of augury in preference for the *litatio* of the *haruspices* or the *tripudium* of the *pullarii*? The latter is surely wrong, as the *pullarii* no longer served the army in an official capacity.⁸⁸ For a treatise possibly as late as the 170s inclusion of an *auguratorium* seems superfluous, if the practice of augury had been abandoned. An *auguratorium* in a marching camp but not a permanent legionary base probably suggests a reliance on augury in the field, when action was imminent and, like the use of *haruspices* as *comites*, demonstrates the continued perceived need for divination.⁸⁹

The approach of battle raised anxiety among the rank and file as well as for commanders. Just as Republican generals often vowed temples if the god(s) granted victory, vows of units or individuals might be expected, but few are on record. A rare example comes from 200. When the news of victory reached

⁸³ See M.-L. Haack, *Prosopographie des haruspices romaines*, *Biblioteca di Studi Etruschi*, XLII, 2006 (Pisa/Rome), nos. 7-8, 35, 44, 74; Wheeler (*supra* n.81), pp.189-91; *contra*, S.P. Yébenes, *Haruspex legionis*, *Gerión*, IX, 1991, pp.175-93.

⁸⁴ *Pan.Lat.* 12 (9).2.2, 4; Barnes, *Constantine*, pp.52-53.

⁸⁵ Front. *Strat.* 1.11.14-15 (1.11: *Quemadmodum incitandus sit ad proelium exercitus*); Polyaeus. *Strat.* 4.3.14; 4.20; Diocletian: Lact. *Mort.pers.* 10; Arnob. *Adv. nat.* 1.46.9; Simmons (*supra* n.53), pp.33-46, esp. 40-41.

⁸⁶ Quint. *Inst.* 8.2.8; Tac. *Ann.* 1.13.1, 15.30.1; *cf.* ΣVerg.Veron. *Aen.* 10.241; note also the omen of eagles at Idistaviso (16 A.D.): Tac. *Ann.* 2.17.2.

⁸⁷ *De mun. castr.* 11; bibliography on the debated date of Ps.-Hygin at E.L. Wheeler, *The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire*, Part II, *REMA*, I, 2004, p.102 n.83; *Plb.* 6.27-32.

⁸⁸ H. von Petrikovits, *Die Innenbauten römischer Legionslager während der Prinzipatszeit*, 1975 (Opladen), pp.76-77; L.F. Pitts/J.K. St. Joseph, *Inchtuthil*, 1985 (London), pp.129-30; absence of *pullarii*: Wheeler (*supra* n.81), pp.187-88.

⁸⁹ Von Petrikovits (*supra* n.88), p.77.

Rome, M. Aurelius Nepos of the *equites singulares*, left behind when his unit departed in 197 for Septimius Severus' second Parthian campaign, dedicated an altar in fulfillment of a vow to the *genius* of his *turma* and *pro salute, itu, reditu et victoria* of the Emperors. His *commilitiones* only returned to Rome in 202. Yet generalizations relating altars to Mars or local deities to vows for a safe return from battle remain largely assumptions. How much fighting (as opposed to policing) the army really did remains a valid question.⁹⁰ In some cases *vota* concerning victory, safety, and return can be substantiated as references to specific events.⁹¹ A *beneficiarius* at a *statio* in distant Dacia Porolissensis, *mu[l]tis insidiis numinibus liberatus*, recorded a *votum* to Nemesis, and the young L. Apronius Caesianus (*cos.ord.* 39 A.D.) credited his exploits against the Numidians to Venus of Eryx, when he served under his father as a *comes* (20 A.D.). In a more dramatic case from 249, Clodius Celsinus set up a dedication to Mars Gradivus at Aquincum to fulfill a *votum* made on the battleline. He had been part of a detachment of the II Adiutrix sent to Viminacium, where *vexillationes* of the army of Moesia Inferior stubbornly refused to abandon the cause of Philip the Arab and his son.⁹² Yet specific *miracula* of such **[[244]]** *Schlachthelfer* remain in the shadows. Dedications of *vota soluta* by veterans of *auxilia* often celebrated their discharge and thus had no specific relationship to combat. Likewise, *vota* prompted by visions and dreams were probably of a personal nature. If in the Late Empire dreams of Emperors and their consultations with “holy men” replaced pagan auspices and rituals, this “innovation,” like belief in bloodless victories through divine aid, only represented a return to Old Testament precedents of divine guidance.⁹³

Rüpke explains the lack of *vota* texts directly related to battles in two ways: the difficulty of arranging to have a stone cut and set up, or a belief in *Schlachthelfer* and/or such identification of the individual with his unit that, given the relatively light casualty rates of ancient battle, the individual disavowed personal endangerment. More credence may be due the former than the latter view. Specifics on the timeframe for cutting a stone *vis-à-vis* receipt of marching orders are elusive and in the field circumstances were prohibitive. Soldiers' use of amulets, however, refutes any notion that personal endangerment did not enter their minds and the case of Clodius Celsinus, if restorations of the text can be trusted, attests a *votum ex acie*.⁹⁴ To what extent Vergil's assignment (*Aen.* 6.660) of those who died *ob patriam pugnando* to the Elysian Fields had any practical influence must remain unknown.

⁹⁰ See B. Dobson, *The Roman Army: Wartime or Peacetime Army?* edd. W. Eck/H. Wolff, *Heer- und Integrationspolitik: Die römischen Militärdiplome als historische Quelle*, 1986 (Cologne), pp.10-25; generalizations: e.g., Webster in *supra* n.25; Aurelius Nepos: *ILS* 2186; M.P.Speidel, *Die Denkmäler der Kaiserreiter: Equites Singulares Augusti*, 1994 (Cologne/Bonn), no. 56, pp.79-81.

⁹¹ Ankersdorfer, pp.108-109; Birley (*supra* n.26), pp.1512, 1515-16, 1524-25; cf. Le Bohec (*supra* n.27), p.554 n.191 on dedications to Victoria Augusta.

⁹² *Beneficiarius*: *AE* 1957.328 (La Caseiu, 224 A.D.), noted by Birley (*supra* n.26), pp.1515-16; Apronius: *ILS* 939; Tac. *Ann.* 3.21; Le Bohec (*supra* n.27), p.553; Clodius: *AE* 1935.164; R. Saxer, *Untersuchungen zu den Vexillationen des römischen Kaiserheeres von Augustus bis Diokletian, Epigraphische Studien*, I, 1967 (Cologne), p.51 no. 92; S. Dusanic, *The End of the Philippi*, *Chiron*, VI, 1976, pp.434-38, followed by K. Dietz, *Senatus contra principem. Untersuchungen zur senatorischen Opposition gegen Kaiser Maximinus Thrax, Vestigia*, XXIX, 1980 (Munich), p.158. Many readings of this text remain uncertain. Note also the crafty stratagem of the *aquilifer* of Caesar's Tenth Legion with an oath to the gods to spur on his hesitant comrades: Caes. *BG* 4.25.3-4. Antonius Primus prayed to the *signa et bellorum di* to quell a minor mutiny and to save the life of Tampius Flavianus at Verona in 69 A.D.: Tac. *Hist.* 3.10.4.

⁹³ *Auxilia*: v.Dom., *Religion*, p.28; cf. Rüpke, p.254; dreams: see the catalogue of references in Le Bohec (*supra* n.27), p.550 nn.157-59; cf. Birley (*supra* n.26), pp.1515-16; O.T. precedents: Heim (*supra* n.11), p.323; Weber (*supra* n.19), p.251; cf. Batsch (*supra* n.4), pp.309, 319.

⁹⁴ Rüpke, p.254; amulets: see *supra* n.3; Clodius: *Marti Gradivo, quem ... congressione [facta prima] in acie constitutus, [imp]loraverat, Clodius Celsinus* (text of Egger in Dusanic, *supra* n.92, p.434).

Names of gods or religious slogans in the daily watchwords (*tesserae*) and in battle cries might offer another indicator of religion in military motivation. Nevertheless, the issue of routine vs. belief is again unavoidable. Vegetius may define what a *tessera* is and Polybius offers a detailed account of the function of *tesserae* in night watches, but neither mentions the words or phrases used as *tesserae*.⁹⁵ As a comprehensive study of *tesserae* (known chiefly from documentary sources) remains a desideratum, a provisional assessment based on some units of *auxilia* in the East must suffice.⁹⁶ At Dura-Europos the daily *tessera* occurs in a few *pridiana* of the cohorts XXII Palmyrorum. A text of 223-235 under Severus Alexander indicates the apparently routine selection of the watchword from the seven planets (*ex septezonis*), in this case, *Mercurius sanctus*. *Iuppiter* on 14 September 233 conforms to this pattern, but under Gordian III *Securitas* was used on 27 May 239 and *Iuppiter Dolichenus sanctus* on the following day. *Tesserae* on ostraca of a *turma*, presumably of the ala Vocontiorum based at Coptos, are known from Krokodilo on the Coptos-Myos Hormos road and date 102/103-118. Five of the eight *tesserae* use gods' names (*Minerva*, bis; *Iuppiter*?; *Neptunus*; *Ve[nus]*) or abstractions (*Salus*; *Pax*, bis).⁹⁷ In both sets of evidence (however [[245]] limited) a preference for divine names is clear. Use of celestial and divine names, like signs of the zodiac used for legionary emblems (noted *infra*), is an appeal to the supernatural.

In contrast to *tesserae*, knowledge of battle cries derives from literary sources, whose window of evidence, open for the battles of the Late Republican civil wars, closes fast in the dearth of information on the details of Roman battles of the Principate and the Late Empire until Vegetius' perfunctory discussion. Arrian planned (*Acies* 25) to have his Cappadocian army raise a war-whoop to Enyalios at a critical point in his scenario of a potential confrontation with the Alani (135), but the hypothetical character of this work and the general association of Enyalios with Ares/Mars precludes assigning too weight to this evidence (an appeal to divine aid? the shock value of a sudden shout? some combination of the two?). Frontinus' omission of war cries in his chapter on inciting an army for battle (*Strat.* 1.11) indicates a lack of stratagematic value to this practice rather than a rejection of its use for morale. Selection of a battle cry belonged to the commanding general's prerogative (Veg. 3.5.4). More instructive, unless an example of Tacitus' literary license, is the shout of A. Severus Caecina's legions near *Pontes Longi* (15 A.D.), when they lured Arminius' Germans into a trap after days of suffering hit-and-run attacks in swampy terrain: *aequis locis aequos deos* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.68.3). Victory and revenge are equated with the gods. What other evidence there is, as with *tesserae*, reflects a preference for divine names, unless a secular term might have greater power of inspiration, such as *Libertas* for the army of Brutus and Cassius Longinus at Philippi.

2 nd campaign against the Albani, 65 B.C.	Pompey: <i>Io Saturnalia</i>		(Dio 37.4.4)
Pharsalus, 48 B.C.	Caesar: <i>Venus Victrix</i> ;	Pompey: <i>Hercules Invictus</i>	(App. <i>BC</i> 2.319)
Thapsus, 46 B.C.	Caesar: <i>Felicitas</i> (<i>BAfr.</i> 83.1)		
Munda, 45 B.C.	Caesar: <i>Venus</i>	Pompeians: <i>Pietas</i>	(App. <i>BC</i> 2.430)
Philippi, 42 B.C.	Octavian: <i>Apollo</i> (Val.Max. 1.5.7)	Brutus: <i>Libertas</i>	(Dio 47.43.1)

⁹⁵ Veg. 2.7.5: *praeceptum ducis, quo vel ad aliquid opus vel ad bellum movetur exercitium*; Plb. 6.34.5-36.9. At 6.35.7 Polybius specifies a single character on a *tessera*.

⁹⁶ *Tesserae* are not treated by K. Stauner, *Das offizielle Schriftwesen des römischen Heeres von Augustus bis Gallienus* (27 v. Chr.–268 n. Chr.), 2004 (Bonn); A.R. Birley informs me that no *tesserae* have yet been found at Vindolanda.

⁹⁷ Fink, nos. 47.i.3; 48.14; 50.5, 7; *O.Krok.* 121-28.

In comparison, Vegetius' Christianized list of battle cries (3.5.4) appears extremely conventionalized (*victoria, palma, virtus, triumphus imperatoris*), as *Deus nobiscum* has replaced multiple possibilities of pagan deities.

Rituals (*lustratio*), diviners (*haruspices*) as *comites*, divine names as *tesserae* and battle cries suggest that religion has not ceased to be a motivating factor for Roman soldiers under the Principate, although the available evidence is slight. Pre-battle orations might also be considered.⁹⁸ As in the case of Germanicus before Idistaviso (16 A.D.), the report of favorable auspices (not taken publicly) was part of the pre-battle *contio* (Tac. *Ann.* 2.14.1). A need for perception of the gods' favor persisted. Imperial historians did not stress religious factors in quite the same way as a Livy, emphasizing the role of the gods' in Rome's rise to greatness—and the semi-divinity of the Emperor perhaps rendered that theme precarious for historians. But the real evidence for divine presence in combat and battles of the gods lies with the *signa militaria*.

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According to Muslim tradition, the Angel Gabriel fought at the Battle of Badr (15 March 624) and contributed to Muhammed's first significant victory. His presence was [[246]] associated with the Prophet's banner. Later the Caliph Umar (634-644) dispatched generals under special banners for expansion of the Muslim conquests into Persia and Azerbaijan after the decisive victory over the Sasanids at Nihawand (642).⁹⁹ Crosses, icons, and banners blessed by priests no less represented Christian *Schlachthelfer* with Byzantine armies.¹⁰⁰ Should the Roman *signa militaria* somehow be different? Nearly all ancient and medieval armies employed standards or flags/banners of some type. Only the Greek phalanx of the Classical period lacked *signa*, as the Classical phalanx's relative tactical indivisibility and primitive command structure did not require guides of maneuver, although pre-battle sacrifices and the paean (*vel sim.*) as a battle cry assured divine aid. By the middle Hellenistic period versions of the Macedonian phalanx added *signa*.¹⁰¹

Military standards serve a double function: some may be symbols of identity, which simultaneously provide guides of maneuver and a unit's focal point—a necessity in maintaining some sort of organization for hundreds, if not thousands, of men in the confusion of combat; others may have religious significance as mobile symbols of a divinity present with troops on the battleline.¹⁰² The two functions are neither mutually exclusive nor always combined. No evidence, for example, attributes any religious purpose to the Hellenistic *signa*.

⁹⁸ See Rüpke, p.152.

⁹⁹ Ibn-Hisham (d. 833), 450, 516-17, in A. Guillaume, tr., *The Life of Mohammed; A Translation of Ishaq's Sirat Rasul Allah*, 1978 (Karachi), pp.303-304, 340; cf. Koran 8.17; Tabari, 4.63, in M.H. Zoteberg, tr., *Chronique de Tabari*, III, 1871 (Paris), p.482; G. Rex Smith, tr. *The History of al-Tabari*, XIV: *The Conquest of Iran*, 1994 (Albany), pp.3-4; neither Zoteberg nor Smith recognize the significance of Umar's banners, but see F. Sarre, Die altorientalischen Feldzeichen, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung eines unveröffentlichten Stückes, *Klio*, III, 1903, pp.361-62.

¹⁰⁰ J.-R. Vieillefond, Les pratiques religieuses dans l'armée Byzantine d'après les traits militaires, *REA*, XXXVII, 1935, pp.322-30; P. Goubert, Religion et superstitions dans l'armée Byzantine à la fin du VI^e siècle, *OCP*, XIII, 1947, pp.495-500; cf. G.T. Dennis, Byzantine Battle Flags, *ByzF*, VIII, 1982, pp.51-59; on icons of Mary/*Theotokos* see now B.V. Pentchava, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*, 2006 (University Park), esp. chs. 2-3.

¹⁰¹ Perseus lost 27 *signa* to the Romans at Phalanna (171 B.C.); Liv. 42.66.9; Asclep. *Tact.* 2.9, 6.3; cf. N. Sekunda, *Hellenistic Infantry Reform in the 160's B.C.*, 2001 (Lodz), pp.28-42, 100-104, who argues for Roman influence on the Seleucid and Ptolemaic armies; on Persian flags and banners from the Achaemenids to the Sasanids see A. Shapur Shahbazi, *DERAF*, *EIr*, IV, 1996, pp.312-15.

¹⁰² Tactical/organizational function: Veg. 2.13.2-3; Isid. *Orig.* 18.3.5; mobile gods: Renel, pp.285-86; Helgeland, *Army*, p.1503; L. Dirven, □□□ □□□, SM', SIGNUM: A Note on the Romanization of the Semitic Cult Standard, *Parthica*, VII, 2005, p.131.

Roman *signa* as identity symbols and guides of maneuver do not fuel dispute: technical tactical vocabulary in Latin revolved about the *signa*.¹⁰³ A religious role for the *signa*, however, has stirred the dust of debate. Von Domaszewski's thesis that *signa* provided the basis of the army's religion until replaced with *Kaiserkult* by Septimius Severus no longer attracts disciples. Indeed the very notion of a distinct "army religion" divorced from that of [[247]] the general civilian population is now under fire.¹⁰⁴ The anthropological fascination of Renel's day with totemism inspired his overly enthusiastic application of that phenomenon to the *signa*: originally embodiments of gods of clans and later converted into the true gods of the army, although his appreciation of comparanda from other cultures should not be ignored.¹⁰⁵ A subsequent consensus that the *signa* received veneration as *numina* and divine symbols also faces recent attacks, as some reject that the *signa* were even *numina* or prefer to see them as mere utensils and the so-called "cult of the *signa*" as only an appendage to *Kaiserkult*.¹⁰⁶

Criticism of the religiosity of the *signa*, however, has swung the pendulum of scholarship too far. Focus on the cult of the *signa*, as seen in the *feriale Duranum* and epigraphical texts from legionary and auxiliary comps, chiefly looks at official cult and personal beliefs. Certainly the *signa* did not answer prayers or receive *vota*, although they could be the recipients of cult altars and joint dedications with gods, *genii*, and the *numen* of the emperor(s).¹⁰⁷ Any lasting veneration derived from the totemic origin of some *signa* is too easily dismissed, particularly as some *auxilia* units brought symbols of their native religions with them into Roman service and this phenomenon parallels the origins of some legionary *signa*.¹⁰⁸ Intercultural clashes of Romans and non-Romans in battle and diplomacy brought the contrast of rival gods to the fore, but these cases are argued away. A tendency to downplay all evidence attesting the holiness of the *signa*, as if the veneration of the *signa* is an erroneous modern construct,¹⁰⁹ displays the same attitude (argued above to be ill-conceived) as those rejecting a role for religion in Roman warfare between Caesar and Constantine. *Signa militaria* need not have the power to cure the common cold or grant prayers in order to convey a sense of divine protection and to cultivate a belief that Roman gods as *Schlachthelfer* fought beside the *gregarii milites* of the legions. The *signa* represented the "lightning

¹⁰³ See v.Dom., *Fahnen*, pp.1-12: still the basic treatment; in general also see A.-J. Reinach, *Signa militaria*, *DarSag*, IV.2, 1877, pp.1307-25; W. Liebenam, *Feldzeichen*, *RE*, VI, 1909, cols. 2151-61, and W. Kubitschek, *Signifer*, *RE*, Reihe 2, II, 1923, cols. 2325-47; for a partial catalogue (not illustrated) of depictions of the *aquila* and other *signa*, see O. Stoll, *Römisches Heer und Gesellschaft*, *MAVORS*, XIII, 2001 (Stuttgart), pp.18-46. The paper of Elisabetta Todisco in this volume also addresses religion and the *signa*. On the *draco*, not discussed in this paper, see J.C.N. Coulston, The 'draco' standard, *JRMES*, II, 1991, 101-14, to whose bibliography should be added: M.P. Speidel, The Master of the Dragon Standards and the Golden Torc: An Inscription from Prusias and Prudentius' *Peristephanon*, *TAPA*, CXV, 1985, pp.283-87. Coulston notes (p.110) that von Domaszewski and Renel (*supra* n.102) were the last attempts at a comprehensive treatment of *signa*, although Coulston does not address any potential religious aspects of the *draco*.

¹⁰⁴ V.Dom., *Religion*; cf. Ankersdorfer, pp.43-44, 215; Stoll, *Integration* (*supra* n.24).

¹⁰⁵ Renel, esp. pp.281-82; cf. the blistering rejection of his totemism by E. Remy, *Les enseignes romaines*, *MusB*, IX, 1905, pp.305-12; Rüpke, p.185.

¹⁰⁶ *Numina*: v.Dom., *Religion*, p.10; Nock, *HTR*, pp.239-40; Ankersdorfer, pp.43-44; Helgeland, *Army*, pp.1477-78; not *numina*: Stäcker, p.210; utensils: Rüpke at nn.110, 148 *infra*; *Kaiserkult*: Rüpke, p.187; Stoll, *Integration*, pp.293-95, 431-32.

¹⁰⁷ V.Dom., *Religion*, pp.10, 19; Nock, *HTR*, pp.239-40; Ankersdorfer, pp.43-44, 215, followed by Stoll, *Integration*, pp.257-94, and Stäcker, pp.207-208. But note text at n.167 *infra* for a dedication exclusively to the *aquila* and the *signa*.

¹⁰⁸ Supporters of totemic origins: A. Alföldi, *Hasta—Summa Imperii*, *AJA*, LXIII, 1959, pp.12-14; Webster, pp.136-37; Helgeland, *Army*, pp.1476; M. Henig, A Question of Standards, *OJA*, II, 1983, p.111; *auxilia*: I.P. Haynes, The Romanisation of Religion of the *Auxilia* of the Roman Imperial Army from Augustus to Septimius Severus, *Britannia*, XXIV, 1993, pp.144, 154. Ankersdorfer (p.215) apparently concedes a totemic origin for *signa*, but thinks it was no longer understood during the Principate.

¹⁰⁹ *E.g.*, Stoll, *Integration*, pp.293, following Ankersdorfer (*supra* n.107) and Rüpke, pp.186-88.

rods” of divine power on the battlefield. They were more than mere utensils. Some arguments questioning the holiness of the *signa* should be reconsidered.

The slight epigraphical record for a cult of the *signa* before the third century and a marked increase of religious dedications in that century coincide with a recognized trend toward abstractions and personifications in the religious inscriptions of military personnel. All this suggests to Stoll that the *signa*’s essence as *numina*, which he sees as an advance beyond the *signa* as identity symbols, must be tied to this trend and the *signa*’s association with *Kaiserkult*. Hence the extreme position: “Ohne Kaiser keine Feldzeichen.” Although the cult of the *signa per se* is not the concern of this paper, Stoll’s view would deny any earlier [[248]] religious significance of the *signa*, which is certainly erroneous,¹¹⁰ and raises a methodological objection. An absence or a minimal number of inscriptions is taken to indicate a lack of religious belief: no inscriptions = no religion. *Non sequitur!* As Ankerdorfer more prudently recognized, veneration of the *signa*, personal acts of individuals, need not require setting up inscriptions.¹¹¹

But the religious nature of the *signa* cannot be separated from their origins and their typology. Literary sources, often imprecise in using *signa* as a collective term for any type of standard or banner, do not distinguish at times *signa*, *vexilla*, and *aquilae* or *signiferi* from *vexillarii* or *aquiliferi*. Further, no depictions of *signa* occur before their appearance on Late Republican *denarii* of the Sullan era, and the value of historical reliefs from the Imperial period for accurate representations is debated.¹¹² All problems raised by the *signa*, including the imperfect understanding of all *phalerae* and other decorations adorning their shafts, cannot be addressed here. Only a modest attempt to reassert the religious veneration of the *signa*—regardless of the presence or absence of an emperor’s portrait—is permitted.

The *signum militare* derives its religious significance from its components: the long thrusting spear or *hasta*, to which symbolic elements are added, initially at the top of the shaft near the spear’s blade: e.g., an eagle to create the *aquila*, a bust/portrait for an *imago*, and a crossbar, from which a banner or ribbons could be suspended, for a *vexillum* or *cantabrum*. Additional elements, including the unit’s *dona militaria* and *phalerae* or medallions displaying portraits of an emperor or a god, might be attached to the shaft below the featured object at the top. It cannot be discounted that some decorations on the *hasta*’s shaft had an apotropaic function. Indeed the religiosity of all *signa* could be increased by adding portraits of gods.

The *hasta*, however, besides its role as a traditional symbol of royal power and sovereignty, possessed magico-religious significance and was associated with both the wolf-god Mars and the boar-god Quirinus, whose name according to various hazy antiquarian traditions (Varro?) denoted “spear” in the Sabine tongue. An imminence of war brought the spontaneous rattling of Mars’ *hasta*e in their *sacrarium* near the Regia, as reported by the *pontifex maximus*.¹¹³ The *vexillum*, which von Domaszewski posited as the

¹¹⁰ Rüpke (p.136) similarly denies any veneration of the *signa* under the Republic because of the lack of a standing army. On this view, veneration of the *signa* as embodiments of divine properties can only exist in the context of an active cult and regular performance of rituals.

¹¹¹ Stoll, *Integration*, pp.293-94; Ankerdorfer, p.44; the methodological problem also is found in Stäcker: see Wheeler (*supra* n.51), pp.3-4.

¹¹² V.Dom., *Fahnen*, p.24 with nn.3-4; Stäcker, pp.181-84 with nn.120-21, 123; coins: Alföldi (*supra* n.108), pp.4, 13 with pls. 1.1, 4.3-6, 5.10-11; L. Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army*, 1984 (London), pl. 4a-b; reliefs: C.G. Alexandrescu, A Contribution on the Standards of the Roman Army, ed. Z. Visy, *Limes XIX: Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies Held in Pécs, Hungary, September 2003*, 2005 (Pécs), pp.147-56, who argues only representations of *signa* on the tombstones of *signiferi* are accurate.

¹¹³ Just. 43.3.3: *Per ea tempora adhuc reges hastas pro diademate habebant, quas Graeci ‘sceptra’ dixere. Nam et ab origine rerum pro diis immortalibus veteres hastas coluere, ob cuius religionis memoriam adhuc deorum simulacris hastae adduntur; cf.*

initial form of *signum militare*, probably owed its original religious connotation to the *hasta*, to which it was [[249]] attached.¹¹⁴ The *hasta*'s religious significance extended to oaths and treaties. Juppiter, Mars, and Quirinus as gods of the spear guaranteed oaths. For example, the second Roman-Cathaginian treaty (348 B.C.) was sworn by Mars and Quirinus; a spear figures prominently in an archaic scene of striking a *foedus* on a gold coin of 209 B.C.; and Caesennius Paetus' surrender to Vologaeses I at Rhandaia (62 A.D.) included his oath *apud signa*.¹¹⁵

Roman tradition attributed the creation of manipular *signa* to Romulus: a handful of hay attached to a *hasta* or pole; hence the ambiguity of *manipulus* as both a "bundle of hay" and "band of men/military unit." Alföldi identifies this type of *signa* on *denarii* of 49 B.C.¹¹⁶ Varro states that the maniple was the smallest unit to have its own *signum*, although Polybius assigns two *signiferi* to a maniple (*i.e.*, one per *centuria*), a statement that echoes Vegetius' view that each *centuria* had its own *signum*. Although the details of the organization of the pre-manipular and manipular legion exceed the limits of this study, Polybius probably meant that a second *signifer* stood ready to carry the *signum*, if the initial *signifer* was killed or wounded. Multiple *signiferi/vexillarii* are known for later times: a roster of 219 for the cohort XXII Palmyrenorum lists four *vexillarii* in a single *turma*—hardly proof that a *turma* had four *vexilla*.¹¹⁷

But what could possibly be holy about such a poor man's *signum*, a pole topped by a bundle of hay? Indeed Georg Veith, the former army captain, ridiculed the idea of such a *signum*, which would not withstand the rigors of a windy day in the field.¹¹⁸ Ovid, however, clearly asserts that these manipular *signa* enjoyed just as much *reverentia* as the legionary *aquila*. The answer must lie in that no ordinary hay topped these *signa* but rather sacred herbs [[250]] from the Capitol, like those used by the *fetiales* in the ritual of striking a *foedus*.¹¹⁹ Holy hay could stick to a *hasta* despite the wind.

Varro, *apud* Arnob. *Adv. nat.* 6.11: *pro Marte Romanos hastam coluisse*; Plut. *Rom.* 29.1; Alföldi (*supra* n.108), pp.18-19, critiqued by Rüpke, pp.134-35; on honors awarded to units, which might be celebrated on *signa*, see V.A. Maxfield, *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army*, 1981 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), pp.218-35; Stäcker, pp.198-205; portraits of gods: Tac. *Ann.* 15.29.2; Stoll, *Integration*, p.295 with n.371, although not all examples equally convince.

¹¹⁴ V.Dom., *Fahnen*, pp.79-80; Alföldi (*supra* n.108), pp.12, 22-23; *cf.* Serv. *in Aen.* 8.1: when an Italian or Gallic war threatened, a general called the army to assemble by displaying on the Capitol a red flag (*vexillum russeum*) for the infantry and a blue one (*vexillum caeruleum*) for the cavalry; for cult associations of the red and blue flags see S. Dusanic/Z. Petkovic, *The Five Standards of the Pre-Marian Legion. A Note on the Early Plebeian militaria*, *Klio*, LXXXV, 2003, pp.45-46 with n.24. Alföldi's arguments stress the *hasta*'s *mana*, a fashionable concept at his time of writing, but now passé among scholars of religion and subject to criticism (*e.g.*, Rüpke, p.136 with 83; *cf.* p.184, where he denies any religious significance to the *vexillum*). Alföldi's appeal to *mana* elaborates on the ancient evidence, but rejection of the concept of *mana* does not invalidate what the sources say (*e.g.* Justin, Varro *in supra* n.113). Alföldi's *mana*, like Renel's totemism, derives from the same excessive enthusiasm of nineteenth-century ethnologists in explaining what they saw (or thought they saw) in observations of pre-state peoples and the "ritualist" school of interpreting ancient religion. See G. Widengren, *Religionsphänomenologie*, 1969 (Berlin), pp.11-12; H. von Petrikovits, *Die Porta Triumphalis, Beiträge zur römischen Geschichte und Archäologie*, 1976 (Bonn), I, p.18.

¹¹⁵ Plb. 3.25.6; Tac. *Ann.* 15.16.2; *cf.* Liv. 26.48.12: *obstringere perurio ... signa militaria et aquilas sacramentique religionem*, where *aquilas* may not be an anachronism; Tert. *Apol.* 16.8: *religio Romanorum tota castrensia signa veneratur, signa iurat*; coin: Alföldi (*supra* n.108), pl. 6.3-4 with pp.20-23.

¹¹⁶ Ov. *Fast.* 3.115-18; Plut. *Rom.* 8.6; *Orig.gent.Rom.* 22.3; Serv. *in Aen.* 11.870; Isid. *Orig.* 9.3.50, 18.3.5; *cf.* 17.9.106; Alföldi (*supra* n.108), p.14 with pls. 1.1, 10 fig. 10.

¹¹⁷ Varro *Ling.* 5.88; Plb. 6.24.6; Veg. 2.13.2; F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 1957-79 (Oxford), I, p.707; *P.Dura* 100.xxxvii.23, xxxix.9, 13, 17 (=Fink, no. 1); M.P. Speidel, *Eagle-Bearer and Trumpeter*, *BJ*, CLXXVI, 1976, p.146; but *cf.* G. Webster, *Standards and Standard-bearers in the Alae*, *BJ*, CLXXXVI, 1986, pp.106-108. An attempt to see the original maniple as smaller than a *centuria* and something like the later *contubernium* is not convincing: M. Stemmler, *Die römische Manipularordnung und der Funktionswandel der Centurien*, *Klio*, LXXXII, 2000, p.110.

¹¹⁸ G. Veith, in J. Kromayer/G. Veith, *Heerwesen und Kriegführung der Griechen und Römer*, 1928 (Munich), p.277 n.2.

¹¹⁹ Ov. *Fast.* 3.115-16: *Illa [scil. signa] faeno, sed erat reverentia faeno/ Quantam nunc aquilas cernis habere tuas*; Liv. 1.24.4-5; Alföldi (*supra* n.108), p.14; Webster, p.139 n.1; *cf.* Renel, pp.238-54. Rüpke (p.185 n.8) begrudgingly concedes the point.

Not less significant for religion—and no doubt totemic in origin—was the animal skin headdress worn over the *signifer*'s helmet, draping the bearer's shoulders and with its front paws hanging over the bearer's chest and sometimes crossed. The *signifer*'s own head appeared to emerge quite literally from the animal's mouth. Covering the head (*caput opertum*), when performing a sacred act (like handling the *signa*?), was standard procedure in Roman religion. The rationalist Polybius' silence on this item of equipment probably derives from its religious connotations, a theme he tended to scorn, although he made a point (6.23.12-13) of emphasizing the psychological stratagem of the elaborate helmets of the *hastati*, designed to make them appear taller and to terrorize the enemy.

Couissin's contention that that *signifer*'s animal headdress appears only in the first century ignores Late Republican coinage. Alföldi identifies a wolf-skin as the headdress of two apparent *signiferi* on *denarii* of the late Sullan era of the *monetalis* L. Roscius Fabatus (*pr.* 49 B.C.): the obverse shows the head of a *signifer* with a small *vexillum* to the left. Other *denarii* of Roscius and the *monetalis* L. Papius—and still others of later date—also feature either a *vexillum* or an *aquila* on the obverse, with a gryphon and snake associated with Juno Sospites on the reverse. The shaggy fur of the wolf-skin is distinct from the smooth skin of the headdress on the other coins. Alföldi's identification of a wolf-skin makes sense for the bearer of a standard sacred to the wolf-god Mars, although many of the other pieces feature on the obverse the head of the warrior goddess, Juno Sospites (the Preserver), in her goat cap with its bent-back horns. Roscius and Papius both had connections with Lanuvium, the cult site of Juno Sospites.¹²⁰

Vegetius, however, specifies a bearskin, worn by both *signiferi* and his *antesignani*, *ad terrorem hostium*—confirmed in part by the tombstone reliefs of two auxiliaries (a *signifer* and an *imaginifer*), on which the claws protruding from the front paws are too long for another animal.¹²¹ A bearskin headdress can also be identified on at least one *cornicien* on Trajan's Column. Although no literary reference to musicians wearing the same headdress as the *signiferi* survives, Josephus refers to the legion's musicians as trumpeters of the *signa*, [[251]] which he regarded as *hiera*, and in the Flavian era trumpeters marched with the *signa*.¹²² The common headdress suggests that legionary musicians shared with the *signiferi* an association with the sacred *signa*. By the time of Trajan some *signiferi* wore a lion's skin and a leopard-skin appears under Marcus Aurelius. Conceivably, with the creation of individual emblems for particular legions,¹²³ the original wolf-skin may have yielded to that of an animal more relevant to individual

¹²⁰ Couissin (*supra* n.2), p.422; Alföldi (*supra* n.108), p.4 with pl. 4.3-4; *cf.* pls. 4.1-2, 5-12; 5.7-8; H.J. Rose, *Religion in Greece and Rome*, 1959 (New York), p.217. Two other *denarii* of L. Papius c.79 B.C.—but without the *signa* on the obverse—also show Juno Sospites in her goat cap on the obverse and a gryphon on the reverse. See C.E.V. Nixon, *Catalogue of the Coins in the Macquarie University Museum of Ancient Cultures*, 1996 (Sydney), p.31 nos. 174-75. Lanuvium was the *patria* of the Papian *gens* and Roscius also came from Lanuvium: E.S. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*, 1974 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), p.118 n.92. *Cf.* Nixon, p.32 no. 180: a *denarius* of Roscius Fabatus of c.64 B.C. with the same motifs but without *signa*. The animal skin headdress of the *signifer* is not discussed in the articles of Liebenam and Kubitschek: *supra* n.103. Reinach (*supra* n.103, p.1323) notes a woolen coat for the *aquilifer* (on what basis is unclear) and only refers to an animal skin for other types of *signiferi*.

¹²¹ Veg. 2.16.2; *ILS* 2580 (Pintaius, *signifer*, *cohors V Asturum*, Bonn) with v.Dom. *Fahnen*, fig. 86=Renel, fig. 56; *ILS* 9167 (Genialis, *imaginifer*, *cohors VII Raetorum*, Mainz-Weisenau, Claudian-Flavian) with Stäcker, Taf. VI; *cf.* Lepper/Frere, pl. LXXXIII (=Cichorius CXIII, scene 300). It can be debated whether the second-century tombstone (no inscription preserved) of a *vexillarius* from Balkan Ragusa Vecchia (mod. Cavtat) shows him with the headdress of a wolf-skin or a bearskin: v.Dom. *Fahnen*, fig. 87; M. Rostovtzeff, *Vexillum and Victory*, *JRS*, XXXII, 1942, p.97 fig. 10.

¹²² *Cornicien*: Lepper/Frere, pls. VIII, LXXIX (=Cichorius V, CVI, scenes 16, 283); *cf.* v.Dom., *Fahnen*, p.7 fig. 1; Jos. *BJ* 5.48: οἱ σαλπικταὶ τῶν σημαίων; *cf.* 3.124.

¹²³ For an attempt at a comprehensive catalogue of legionary emblems, see Stoll, *Integration*, pp.504-71, who omits the XV Apollinaris and its griffin. See I. Piso, Die Legio XV Apollinaris in den markomannischen Kriegen, *ActaMusNapocennsis*,

legions, although this view does not explain Vegetius' generic bearskin. Depictions of *signiferi* and musicians on tombstones do not universally show the headdress.¹²⁴ In any case, there is no need to conjecture a Celtic or Germanic origin for the *signifer's* headdress,¹²⁵ as the practice more probably derives from Rome's own totemic heritage.

A third possible "earliest" *signum*, the so-called *manus*-type, features a flat open hand of bronze with the four fingers extended but closed together and the thumb often slightly projecting to the side, as if a hand signal "to halt." The *manus-signum* is not mentioned in literary sources. Veith, with typical military practicality, conjectured its invention as an improvement on a *centurio's* hand signal to his *centuria*. Likewise, this *signum's* antiquity could only be conjectured, as no depiction occurs earlier than a coin of Caligula from Spain, unless the funerary monument of M. Paccius Marcellus, *primipilaris* of the IIII *Scythica*, is Augustan rather than Flavian. The *manus'* longevity extends to the third-century tombstone of a *signifer* of the II *Traiana* at Egyptian Nicopolis.¹²⁶ Apart from the *hasta* itself, a religious meaning for the *manus* is "up in the air": von Domaszewski speculated that the *manus* symbolized *Fides*; for Webster the hand is reaching to the sky for divine aid; Reinach, drawing from a comparison with Egyptian *signa*, suggests that the *manus* represents the presence and force of a god; and Renel supposes it a symbol for the holy bundle of hay (*manipulus faeni*).¹²⁷

A fourth type of *signa*, the *cantabrum*, is only known from sources of c.200 or later. No depictions are preserved. Tertullian and Minucius Felix include *cantabra* in their comparisons of Roman *signa* to Christian crosses and indicate that, like *signa* and *vexilla*, the *cantabra* were worshiped.¹²⁸ Indeed the *cantabrum* would appear to be a variant of the **[[252]]** *vexillum*, a banner/flag hung from the crossbar on a *hasta*. The banners carried by guilds and *collegia* in parades and religious processions are *contabra*, which may hide behind the *vexilla* described in the *decennalia* procession of Gallienus in 262 and Aurelian's triumph in 273.¹²⁹ In times of civil war the portraits of emperors (or pretenders) could be depicted on *contabra*, as seen in the dedication of Clodius Celsinus, if the restorations are correct.¹³⁰

XXXV, 1998, 97-104, with further discussion by E.L. Wheeler, *Legio XV Apollinaris: From Carnuntum to Satala—and beyond*, edd. Y. Le Bohec/C. Wolff, *Les legions de Rome sous le Haut-Empire*, 2000-2003 (Lyon/Paris), I, pp.264-68; on the origins of emblems for individual legions, see most recently Stäcker, pp.173-79.

¹²⁴ See Couissin (*supra* n.2), pp.422-24; lion-skin: Lepper/Frere, pl. XXV (=Cichorius V, scene 15). The boar *signum* at Lepper/Frere, pl. XXV (=Cichorius XLVIII, scene 122) may quite possibly indicate the *legio I Minerva*: Renel, pp.201-202; L. Rossi, *Trajan's Column and the Dacian Wars*, tr. J.M.C. Toynbee, 1971 (Ithaca), pp.107-108.

¹²⁵ *Sic* Webster, p.141, claiming Celtic influence but citing the German Aestii's use of boar masks in battle: Tac. *Germ.* 45.2.

¹²⁶ Veith (*supra* n.118), pp.277, 405, followed by Harmand (*supra* n.19), p.240 with n.76; v.Dom., *Fahnen*, figs. 14 (*ILS* 2345, Nicopolis), 19, 23, 29-30, 42 (coin of Caligula), 79a, 93; Webster, pl. X; T. Schäfer, *Imperii Insignia: Sella curulis und Fasces, MDAl(R)*, Ergh. XXIX, 1989 (Mainz), p.298 n.426; monument of Paccius (*ILS* 2639): Stäcker, Taf. IV.1; Keppie (*supra* n.112), Tab. 14a; date: M.A. Speidel, *Legio IIII Scythica, its Movement and Men*, ed., D. Kennedy, *The Twin Towns of Zeugma on the Euphrates*, *JRA*, Suppl. XXVII, 1998 (Portsmouth, RI), pp.195-96 no. 69.

¹²⁷ V.Dom., *Fahnen*, p.53; Webster, p.139; Reinach (*supra* n.103), p. 1313; Renel, pp.257-58.

¹²⁸ Tert. *Ad nat.* 1.12: *itaque in Victoriis et cruces colit castrensis religio, signa adorant, signa deierat, signa ipsi Iovi praeferunt. Sed ille imaginum suggestus et totius auri cultus monilia crucum sunt. sic etiam in cantabris atque vexillis, quae non minore sanctitate milita custodit, siphara illa vestes crucum sunt; Apol. 16.8: siphara illa vexillorum et cantabrorum stolae crucum sunt; Min.Fel. Oct. 29.7: vos sane, qui ligneos deos consecratis, cruces ligneas ut deorum vestrorum partes forsitan adoratis. Nam et signa ipsa et cantabra et vexilla castrorum quid aliud quam inauratae cruces sunt et ornatae?* In general see A. Mau, *Cantabrum*, *RE*, III.2, 1899, col. 1495.

¹²⁹ *C.Th.* 14.7.2 (Honorius, 26 Nov. 409): *Collegiatos et vitutarios et Nemesiacos signiferos cantabrariorum et singularum urbium corporatos simili forma praecepimus revocari*; Rostovtzeff (*supra* n.122), p.105 with n.37; Renel, pp.305-306; *HA, Gall.* 8.6: *vexilla centena praeter ea quae collegiorum erant; Aurel. 34.4: vexilla collegiorum atque castrorum; cf. Stoll, Integration*, p.255.

¹³⁰ Dusanec (*supra* n.92), p.434: *vultus h(ostium) p(ublicorum) [de vexillis et can]tabris/ [ultra detra]here nollent*. Stäcker (pp.184-85), unaware of the text of Clodius Celsinus, contends that an emperor's name always appeared on *vexilla*, but all

Unlike the manipular *signa* and the *vexilla*, no tactical function as a guide of maneuver can be assigned to the obscure *cantabra*.

The *imago* and the *aquila* will complete this survey of types of *signa*. An inventor of the *imago*, a *hasta* topped by a portrait bust of the emperor either in the mode of an *aedicula* or a medaillon, is not mentioned in the sources. Stäcker attributes it to Augustus, the initiator of giving phalerae with his portrait to centurions and those of lower ranks as a means to instill loyalty. He sees this innovation as a continuation of a Late Republican practice of a general's name appearing on a *vexillum* besides soldiers' weapons and shields, although Licinius Crassus is the only Republican general known to have had his name on a *vexillum* (Dio 40.18.3).¹³¹ Every legionary cohort would seem to have had its own *imaginifer* rather than one for the whole legion in cohort I, as Vegetius implies (2.6.2): *imaginiferi* are epigraphically attested in other cohorts.¹³² *Imaginiferi* also appear in all types of auxiliary units, including *numeri*, as well as the *cohortes urbanae* and the *vigiles*. As early as Tiberius the *imagines* were expanded to other members (living and dead) of the Julio-Claudian house, a practice that the Flavians and later emperors no doubt continued relevant to their own dynastic interests. Constantine even included portraits of himself and his sons on the *labrarum*. But for reasons of practicality, if not politics, *imagines* of all previous emperors had no place in the army.¹³³ Further, the creation of *imagines* led to a proliferation of emperors' portraits on all types of *signa* but without regulation of the type of portrait. Nor was inclusion of the emperor's portrait required. The presence of an emperor's portrait does not distinguish Praetorian from legionary *signa*. As some *signa* lacked a portrait, Josephus' apparent equation of *signa* and *imagines* is exaggerated and inconsistent with his other usage of the term. Certainly *imagines* could be called *signa*, but all *signa* did not include imperial [[253]] portraits.¹³⁴ The first uncontested evidence for imperial portraits on *signa* (as opposed to the *imago*) comes from the Jewish reaction to the prefect Pontius Pilate's bringing *signa* (of his *auxilia*: he did not command legionaries) into the Temple at Jerusalem—probably in 26 A.D.¹³⁵

Imperial evidence cited pertains to periods of civil war (Tac. *Hist.* 2.85.1; Suet. *Vesp.* 6.3). The portraits of Clodius' text also belong to a civil war.

¹³¹ Stäcker, pp.185-86, who takes the *niketeria*, which soldiers threw on Augustus' funeral pyre (Dio 56.42.2) as such *phalerae*. The case for Augustus would be strengthened, if the funerary monument of Paccius Marcellus is Augustan rather than Flavian; cf. *supra* n.126. The *aedicula* form of the *imago* is seen on the tombstone of Genialis: see *supra* n.121. In general on *imaginiferi* see also v.Dom. *Fahnen*, pp.69-73.

¹³² W. Zwickler, Bemerkungen zu den römischen Heeresfahnen in der älteren Kaiserzeit, *BRGK*, XXVII, 1939, p.18 n.47; Stäcker, p.147 with n.42.

¹³³ Suet. *Calig.* 14.3 (but see text *infra* at nn.192-93); Euseb. *VC* 31.2; Zwickler (*supra* n.132), p.18 n.47; Stäcker, pp.187-90, who interprets Veg. 2.6.2 to mean that *imagines* of all emperors were carried, but account must be taken for changes in dynasties. Cf. Wheeler (*supra* n.51) at n.9.

¹³⁴ Praetorian and legionary *signa*: Zwickler (*supra* n.132), pp.15-22; cf. Alexandrescu (*supra* n.112), pp. 149-50. The staff of a *vexillum* includes a *phalera* with an emperor's portrait on the tombstone of the *vexillarius* at Rugusa Vecchia: Rostovtzeff (*supra* n.121), pp.96-97 with fig.10. Stäcker (*supra* n.51, pp.203-204) thinks that imperial portraits on legionary *signa* were a form of *dona militaria*: a reward for good performance. Josephus: *BJ* 2.169; cf. *AJ* 18.55; *BJ* 3.124, 5.48, 6.316; for Stoll (*Integration*, p.291 n.355) all references to the *signa* in Josephus imply the presence of imperial portraits, but that view would render *AJ* 18.55 on portraits attached to *signa* an absurd tautology.

¹³⁵ Stäcker (p.186) attributes the proliferation of the emperor's image on *signa* to Augustus, but the first explicit evidence comes under Tiberius with Pilate; Josephus emphasizes it as a new practice: Jos. *AJ* 18.55-57; cf. *BJ* 2.169. Despite Zwickler (*supra* n.132, pp.17-18), Stäcker (pp.195-96), and Reddé (n.171 *infra*, p.455 n.47), Josephus explicitly (*AJ* 18.55) refers to portraits attached to *signa*. Therefore the *imago* seems excluded. For the *auxilia* available to Pilate see D. Kennedy, Roman Army, ed. D.N. Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, V, 1992 (New York), pp.794-95; M.P. Speidel, The Roman Army in Judaea under the Procurators, *AncSoc*, XIII/XIV, 1982-83, pp.233-40.

The *imagines* served no tactical function as guides of maneuver, although *signiferi* did actively participate in combat (Veg. 1.20.7), and the *imago* held aloft might have offered a general point of orientation in the confusion of combat. The initial function of the *imagines* was surely political. In fact from a religious perspective, before the development of *Kaiserkult* the soldiers' spiritual veneration for the imperial images probably came more from their attachment to the *signa* or the *hasta* than such images bestowing a *religio* on the *signa*. Non-Romans, however, in their *simplicitas* (cf. Front. *Strat.* 1.11.13) might be duped into having more awe of imperial portraits than the Romans themselves. Development of *Kaiserkult* brought the religious weight of the emperor's own divine claims into balance with the traditional veneration of the *signa*.

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Unlike the Julio-Claudian political contrivance of the *imago*, the most important of all *signa militaria*, the *aquila*, Juppiter's bird, may be among the oldest of all the military standards. Its establishment as the symbol of the legion in the second consulship of C. Marius (104 B.C.) only formalized a trend already in progress. As Pliny reports, the eagle belonged to a group of five animal *signa* of the legions, which also included wolves, minotaurs, horses, and boars/pigs. In the years before 104 all five of these continued to accompany the army, but only the eagle, outranking the others, was taken into battle. Marius abolished the others and retained the *aquila* as the unique legionary palladium. For the minotaur and the boar/pig, confirmation of Pliny comes from Festus, although the common source need not be Verrius Flaccus. Even Vegetius knew (however imperfectly) that the minotaur had once been a *signum*.¹³⁶ Theriomorphic symbols in the Roman army—no doubt with totemic significance—[[254]] existed from the beginning and proliferated when individual legions asserted their individuality as permanent units.¹³⁷

A tactical function for the *aquila*, as long recognized, is elusive: a single standard cannot serve as a guide of maneuver for c.5000 men, nor did the *aquila* identify the location of the legion's commander.¹³⁸ The *aquila*'s station was in the first cohort, where responsibility for it lay (although carried by an *aquilifer*) with the *primipilaris*, for whom the *aquila* served as a personal symbol and who had the general charge of religious observances for the whole legion.¹³⁹ Two *denarii* of 82 B.C. and 49 B.C. display on their reverse an *aquila* flanked by two *signa* with *vexilla* midway down their shafts showing the letter H on the one at the left and P on the right one, generally interpreted as *H(astati)* and *P(rincipes)*. Hence, apparently, with the introduction of the *aquila* and the combination of the thirty maniples of a legion into ten cohorts (not necessarily simultaneous events), the first two lines of the old manipular *triplex acies*, the *hastati* and the *principes*, retained their manipular *signa* (interestingly with *vexilla* attached). The *aquila*

¹³⁶ Plin. *HN* 10.16: *Romanis eam [scil. aquilam] legionibus Gaius Marius in secundo consulatu suo proprie dicavit. Erat et antea prima cum quattuor aliis: lupi, minotauri, equi aprique singulos ordines anteibant; paucis ante annis sola in aciem portari coepta erat, reliqua in castris relinquebantur; Marius in totum ea abdicavit; cf. Festus svv. Minotauri, Porci effigies, pp.135, 266-67 Lindsay; Veg. 3.6.9; Dusanic/Petkovic (supra n.114), pp.42-43; cf. Renel, pp.112-48 for commentary on boars and minotaurs as emblems. Festus (s.v. Pecena, p.235 Lindsay) suggests a connection between the woodpecker (picus) and the vexillum of the Sabines.*

¹³⁷ Swearing by the *aquila* at Liv. 26.48.12 (210 B.C.), cited *supra* n.115, is not necessarily an anachronism exemplifying Livy's well-known use of Caesarian military vocabulary; legionary emblems: *supra* n.123.

¹³⁸ V.Dom., *Fahnen*, p.24 with n.1; Veith (*supra* n. 118), p.402; Harmand (*supra* n. 19), p.238; *aquila* and commander: A. von Domaszewski, *Aquila, RE*, II, 1896, cols. 317-18, rejected by Speidel (*supra* n.117), p.140. Indeed by the third century the *aquila* may have no longer towered aloft on a raised *hasta*. The tombstone at Byzantium of T. Flavius Surillo of the II Adiatrix (Speidel, pp.124-126 with fig. 1, 139-40; *AE* 1976.641) pictures him holding the *aquila* atop a short pole based on a support connected to a strap on his left shoulder, thus having his right hand free for combat. Vegetius (1.20.7), however, specifies that *signiferi* guide their *hastas* with the left hand.

¹³⁹ Veg. 2.6.2, 8.1; Val.Max. 1.6.11; *aquila* as the *primipilaris*' symbol: Plin. *HN* 14.9; Juv. 14.196-98; Artem. *Oneir.* 2.20; cf. B. Dobson, *Die Primipilares*, 1978 (Cologne/Bonn), p.65 with n.170.

replaced only the *signum* of the *triarii/pilani* in cohort I. Since each legion had only one *aquila*, the *triarii/pilani* of cohorts II-X would have used their traditional manipular *signa*.¹⁴⁰ If so (and the “if” is considerable), the *aquila* simultaneously served as a palladium for the entire legion and the manipular *signum* of cohort I’s *pilani*.¹⁴¹ A distinct *signum* for the cohort, although hotly debated, is a phantom, particularly as a commander for a cohort is unknown.¹⁴²

The *aquila*’s lack of a tactical function did not decrease its significance for morale. The *aquilifer* stood somewhere near the initial point of contact with the enemy and he was expected to fight, although scattered anecdotes about the *aquila* in battle mention the *primipilaris* as much as the *aquilifer*. Loss of the *aquila*, the legion’s symbol as well as a **[[255]]** religious object, was a disgrace to the entire legion. The *aquila*’s surging forward into the enemy lines thus added impetus to the legionaries close enough to observe it (probably only members of cohort I), as did the famous exempla of hurling the *aquila* into the enemy’s lines (discussed *infra*).¹⁴³

Originally the *aquila*’s function like those of the other four standards (wolf, minotaur, horse, and boar/pig) must have been religious. For Renel, the *signum* of an animal figure atop a pole represents a “perche de malediction,” from which the divine power associated with the animal protected his worshipers and cursed to destruction their enemies. The concept differs little from the apotropaic function of amulets worn by individual soldiers or apotropaic devices on shields and helmets or among the decorations on the *hastae* of *signa*. If the totemic view of theriomorphic *signa* seems too primitive for historical Romans, perhaps modern scholars tend to rationalize excessively Roman behavior and to forget the persistence of apotropaic amulets. It hardly seems necessary to argue for the pervasive influence of magic in the Roman world or to forget the Roman ritual of *devotio*. Indeed, the Latin phrase *infesta signa* attests a belief in the religious properties of the *signa* as indicators of the visible presence of the gods as *Schlachthelfer*.¹⁴⁴ An argument that the phrase became a conventional metaphor with little religious meaning in historical times cannot be off-handedly rebutted, although advocates of this argument should be prepared to fix a point at which the *signa* lost this characteristic—and that is difficult to do.

Recently, a more political view of the original five totemic *signa* suggests that they represent a union of patrician and plebeian cults in the pre-manipular army c.490 B.C., just after the first secession of the *plebs* in 494 B.C., when the need for manpower in the Volscian-Sabine wars admitted plebeians to

¹⁴⁰ On the coins see Veith (*supra* n. 118), p.404; Harmand (*supra* n. 19), p.239-40; Keppie (*supra* n.112), pp.67, 224-25 with pl. 4a-b; for a different view of the H and P on these coins, see Y. Le Bohec, Les légendes H et P sur les monnaies aux enseignes de 82 et 49 avant Jésus-Christ, ed. B. Colombat, *Curiosité historique et intérêts philologiques: Hommage à Serge Lancel, Recherches & Travaux*, LIV, 1998 (Grenoble), pp.35-42, who *inter alia* cites the lack of numismatic parallels for *h(astati)* and *p(rincipes)* and argues a contemporary political context for his supplements *h(onos)* and *p(ietas)*.

¹⁴¹ Some believe the manipular *signum* of the *pilani* served as a standard for the whole cohort: H.M.D. Parker, *The Roman Legions*, 1928 (Oxford), pp.41-42; A. Neumann, *Vexillarius, RE*, Reihe 2, VIII, 1958, cols. 2447-48, followed by Stäcker, p.183; but see the following note.

¹⁴² A summary of the debate in Harmand (*supra* n.19), p.239, who avoids taking sides and omits Renel’s view (p.27: *pro*) and Zwikker’s arguments (*supra* n.132, pp.8-14) for a *vexillum* as the cohortal *signum*, although this is doubted by Stäcker, p.183 with additional bibliography at n.123; see also Keppie (*supra* n.112), p.67 (*contra*); lack of a known commander for a cohort: B. Isaac, *Hierarchy and Command-Structure in the Roman Army*, ed. Y. Le Bohec, *La hiérarchie (Rangordnung) de l’armée romaine*, 1995 (Paris), p.29, whose plausible conclusions are disregarded by A. Goldsworthy, *Community under Pressure: The Roman Army at the Siege of Jerusalem*, edd. A. Goldsworthy/I. Haynes, *The Roman Army as a Community, JRA*, Suppl. XXXIV, 1999 (Portsmouth, RI), p.205.

¹⁴³ Caes. *BG* 4.25.3-5, 5.37.5; Val.Max. 1.6.11; Suet. *Aug.* 10.4; Flor. 1.15.5; Tac. *Hist.* 3.22.4; Speidel (*supra* n.117), pp.140-42. It was supposedly a distinction of Caesar that no *aquila* of his armies had ever been lost: Caes. *BC* 3.64.3-4. On hurling *signa* into the enemy’s ranks, see *infra* at nn.168-69.

¹⁴⁴ Renel, pp.64-65; *cf.* 311; *infesta signa: e.g.*, Caes. *BG* 3.93, 6.8.6, 7.51.3; Cic. *Font.* 16; Sall. *Cat.* 60.2; Liv. 2.30.11, 26.13.11; Luc. 3.330; Flor. 1.17.2; Veg. 3.20.1.

military service for the first time. As Pliny assigns each of these *signa* to an *ordo*, the eagle (Juppiter), the wolf (Mars), and the horse (Quirinus) would represent patrician cults and are assigned to the *principes*, *hastati*, and the patrician *equites* respectively; the plebeian triad of Ceres, Liber, and Libera was accommodated by adding the Minotaur (Liber) for the proto-*triararii* and the boar/pig (Ceres) for the plebeian *equites* (probably the *equites ferentarii*). Thus Pliny's order of these *signa* would reflect the subsequent integrated army: the three *ordines* of infantry (two patrician and one plebeian) and the patrician and plebeian units of cavalry.¹⁴⁵ Much here is speculative. A connection of the eagle and Juppiter, the *princeps* of the gods, with the *principes* of the army, assumes that the *principes* were originally the first battleline. But that cannot be proved. Why should the *triararii*, the remnant of the old Servian phalanx, be plebeians?¹⁴⁶

Nevertheless, a connection of the *signa* with the integration of plebeians into the army and the first *secessio plebis* finds at least some confirmation from other evidence. When plebeian agitation over debt flared up again after three victories of the 494 B.C. campaigning season relieved external threats, the dictator M'. Valerius, sympathetic to plebeian **[[256]]** complaints, resigned because of the Senate's intransigence over plebeian issues. The consuls marched the army away from the city on the pretext of a new threat from the Aequi, lest the plebeian agitators receive support from the soldiers. Bound by their military oath to obey the consuls, the soldiers later mutinied at the instigation of Sicinius Bellutus, seized the *signa*, appointed new centurions, and withdrew to the *sacer mons* on the Anio River. The first *secessio plebis* had begun.¹⁴⁷

Only Dionysius of Halicarnassus mentions the detail of seizing the *signa*. Apparently their possession enabled the soldiers to remain loyal to their oath but to circumvent obeying orders from the patrician consuls. A precise understanding of the circumstances is elusive, but clearly possession of the sacred *signa* was significant. A parallel comes centuries later (14 A.D.) in the emphasis attached to possession of the *signa* (indifferently termed a *vexillum* by Tacitus) in the mutiny of the German legions (Tac. *Ann.* 1.38.2, 39.3). More important for present purposes, plebeian seizure of the *signa* triggered Dionysius' only extant discussion of the army standards. In an interesting aside on the sanctity of the *signa*, Dionysius notes that they are the most highly honored objects of the Romans during a campaign and considered holy, as if temples of the gods.¹⁴⁸ This writer of the Augustan age could not more clearly attest the numinous nature of the *signa*, which he must have understood in terms of the standards in his own time, since he does not mention Pliny's theriomorphic *signa*. Further, Dionysius refers to *all* the *signa*, not just the *aquila*.

Polybius' silence about these theriomorphic *signa* coincides with his neglect of the *signifer*'s headdress and his reference to *signiferi* but not *signa*. Pliny indicates that Marius' elevation of the *aquila* to the single symbol of the legion used in battle only formalized a current practice. Specific patrician and plebeian cults had probably long lost much of their relevance for the bulk of legionaries by the end of the second century B.C. and probably had none at all for the *censi capite*, whom Marius began to recruit. Given the religious function of such theriomorphic *signa*, they were probably retained as traditional

¹⁴⁵ Dusanic/Petkovic (*supra* n.114), pp.42-56.

¹⁴⁶ On the *hastati-principes* problem see E. Rawson, The Literary Sources for the Pre-Marian Legion, *PBSR*, XXXIX, 1971, pp.24-26; survivals from the Servian phalanx in the manipular army: E.L. Wheeler, The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part I, in Le Bohec/Wolff (*supra* n.45), pp.332-33.

¹⁴⁷ Liv. 2.31.7-32.7; Dion.Hal. *Ant.Rom.* 6.45.

¹⁴⁸ Dion.Hal. *Ant.Rom.* 6.45.2· τιμιώτατα γὰρ Ῥωμαίοις ταῦτα ἐπὶ στρατείας καὶ ὡς περ ἰδρύματα θεῶν ἱερὰ νομίζεται. Cf. Rüpke, p.136: "Der Militärapparat, ohne *signa* nicht denkbar, führt von der *Konzeption her* kein Eigenleben, sondern stellt ein bloßes Instrument dar, selbst noch in der späten Republik"; cf. *supra* n.110.

elements for cult observances in the camps. As a *Schlachthelfer* on the battlefield, the *signum* of Juppiter, which had the top rank from the beginning, was probably now thought sufficient. No doubt, as Harmand suggests, Marius' elevation of the *aquila* was a religious act with zooaltrous connotations.¹⁴⁹ Marius aimed to provide a new common religious focal point for *all* legionaries and especially the *censi capite*. Henceforth the *aquila* was often (but not always in literary sources) distinguished from the manipular *signa*.¹⁵⁰ Every legion had an *aquila*, but not the later Praetorian Guard and certainly not the units of *auxilia*. Pairs of eagles were said to congregate around legionary winter camps and were seen as the true *numina* of legions.¹⁵¹ [[257]] Juppiter, so the story goes, spied an eagle when he set out for battle against his father Saturn and conquered with the eagle as his *Schlachthelfer*.¹⁵² Indeed each legionary *aquila* had its own "little temple" (νεὸς μικρός) in the legion's camp, which Stoll believes is illustrated on the tombstone of the II Parthia's *aquilifer* Felsonius Verus at Syrian Apamea (242-244 A.D.). If so, the relief attests to the zooaltrous character of the *aquila*, for this "little temple" resembles a cage to keep the bird in residence with its worshippers. Dio credits one of the *aquila* in Crassus' army in 53 B.C. as having a will of its own in refusing to cross the Euphrates.¹⁵³

Yet the elevation of the *aquila* to a higher position of religiosity should not be taken as a decrease in the sanctity of the other *signa*. From the time of Caesar on, when legions became permanent entities with regimental traditions and individual emblems (capricorn, bull, griffin, horse, elephant, etc.), each legion had its individual *signum* in addition to the *aquila*.¹⁵⁴ Many of the new individual legionary emblems were zodiacal signs with implications of a connection with supernatural aid (*cf.* Ov. *Fast.* 3.103-14). The relationship of the *aquila* to these legionary symbols of identity is not clear, although it might be assumed that these legionary symbols shared the same degree of veneration as the manipular *signa*.

In any case, the general religiosity of *all signa* should not be questioned. Antonius Primus' prayer to the *signa et bellorum di* to redirect the *furor* of mutinous soldiers within his forces against the enemy appealed to the soldiers' veneration of the *signa* and a belief in their active divine power (Tac. *Hist.* 3.10.4). His use of both *signa* and *bellorum di* is an exaggerated tautology for emphasis.¹⁵⁵ In peacetime under the Republic the *signa* were kept in the *aerarium* at the Temple of Saturn and had to be fetched by the quaestors when the army departed from Rome. Pliny reports (*HN* 13.23) that both the *aquila* and the other *signa* were cleaned and anointed on holidays. Although Pliny was irritated at this expense, which he

¹⁴⁹ Harmand (*supra* n.19), p.464 with n.187.

¹⁵⁰ V.Dom., *Fahnen*, p.12; Parker (*supra* n.141), p.41; *cf.* Ov. *Fast.* 3.115-16 (quoted *supra* n.119); Val.Max. 6.1.11: *signa illum [M. Laetorius Mergus, tr.mil.]. militaria, sacratae aquilae, et certissima Romani imperii custos, severa castrorum disciplina, ad inferos usque persecuta est.* Ankersdorfer (p.44, followed by Stoll, *Integration*, p.294) is much too confident in alleging that this passage of Valerius somehow desacralizes all *signa* except the *aquila*. Note also Sen. *Ep.* 95.35, where the *aquila* is not even mentioned: *primum militiae vinculum est religio et signorum amor et deserendi nefas.*

¹⁵¹ Plin. *HN* 10.16; Tac. *Ann.* 2.17.2: *propria legionum numina.*

¹⁵² Serv. in *Aen.* 9.561: *Iuppiter et Saturnus reges fuerunt. Sed Iuppiter dum cum patre Saturno haberet de agris contentionem, ortum bellum est. ad quod egrediens Iuppiter aquilae vidit augurium. Cuius cum vicisset auscipio, fictum est quod ei pugnanti tela ministraverit; unde etiam a felici augurio natum est, ut aquilae militum signa comitentur.* Servius records a later rationalization (*fictum est*) of the original tale.

¹⁵³ Dio 40.18.1-2; *AE* 1991.1572; J.C. Balty/W. van Rengen, *Apamea in Syria: The Winter Quarters of Legio II Parthica*, tr. W.E.H. Cockle, 1993 (Brussels), p.22 with pl. 1; Stoll (*supra* n.103), pp.13-17; on the phenomenon of *signa* refusing to be pulled up as a sign of divine disfavor, see C.F. Konrad, *Vellere signa*, ed. *id.*, *Augusto Augurio. Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum Commentationes in Honorem Jerzy Linderski*, 2004 (Stuttgart), pp.169-203.

¹⁵⁴ *Cf. supra* nn.123-24.

¹⁵⁵ A different (and topographical) interpretation of Tac. *Hist.* 3.10.4 at v.Dom., *Religion*, p.2; Stoll (*Integration*, p.295 n.271) takes Tacitus' *bellorum deos* as portraits of gods on the *signa*. The view is possible but not compelling. *Cf.* n.167 *infra* for a similar view of Tac. *Ann.* 1.39.4.

puts in the context of Caligula and Nero's extravagant use of perfumed ointments, the practice was so old that even the encyclopedist, an astute excavator of antiquarian arcana, could not discover an initiator. Republican origins of this veneration of all *signa* are not out of the question. If so, a contention that the *signa* were mere instruments lacking religious significance would have another nail in its coffin.¹⁵⁶

Associations of the *signa* with temples are not infrequent. If lost *signa* (not just *aquilae*) were ever recovered from an enemy, Augustus specified that they were to be stored in **[[258]]** the Temple of Mars Ultor.¹⁵⁷ The reverence for the Roman *signa* extended to the Parthians, who kept the *signa* taken from Crassus (53 B.C.) and Decidius Saxa (40 B.C.) in temples.¹⁵⁸ In the Near East defeat of the enemy meant a defeat of hostile gods. For Assyrians, the capture of the enemy's cult statue from a temple or the *signa* of a god in the field meant robbing the enemy of that god's protective powers.¹⁵⁹ Parthian practice is likely to have observed Near Eastern traditions. Roman *evocatio* shares some aspects of this concept, as does Roman obliteration of enemy cult sites (see Part II).

What Romans did with captured enemy *signa* is not clear. Records of captured *signa* began to be kept in 310 B.C. Perhaps they were burned with the stockpiles of captured weapons, although this practice is last attested in 86 B.C. Physical collections of heaps of enemy weapons and *signa* seen (*e.g.*) on the Arch of Orange or Trajan's Column may be commemorative fictions.¹⁶⁰

Further, despite the scene of the Parthian return of an *aquila* on Augustus' breastplate of the famous Porta Prima statue, coins celebrated the event of 20 B.C. with the legend *SIGNIS RECEPTIS*.¹⁶¹ The *aquila* standard is not singled out and other varieties of *signa* must have also been in Parthian hands. Similarly, when Germanicus (16 A.D.) recovered the *aquilae* (and other *signa*?) lost at the Teutoberg Forest seven years earlier, Tiberius commemorated the event with an arch near the Temple of Saturn and not far from an arch of Augustus celebrating the return of the *signa* from Parthia. But Germanicus' arch recalled *recepta signa cum Varo amissa*.¹⁶²

Loss of a legion's *aquila* or other *signa* in battle did not automatically lead to disbandment of the legion.¹⁶³ Mutiny was another matter.¹⁶⁴ Rather curiously for sacred **[[259]]** objects like the *signa* and the

¹⁵⁶ *Aerarium*: Liv. 3.69.8, 4.22.1, 7.23.3; Renel, pp.285-86; instruments: Rüpke at *supra* nn.110, 148. Neither Rüpke (p.187) nor Stoll (*Integration*, pp.260-61) consider Pliny's reference to ancient practice and take the passage as a measure to prevent tarnishing of metal objects or simply "spit and polish" for parades or the start of a campaign.

¹⁵⁷ Dio 55.10.4; *RGDA* 29.2.

¹⁵⁸ Hor. *Ep.* 1.18.56-57; Dirven (*supra* n.102), pp.128, 131; for the return of these *signa* and the Parthian settlement (not a *foedus*) of 20 B.C. as one of the great non-events of Roman history, see E.L. Wheeler, Roman Treaties with Parthia: *Völkerrecht* or Power Politics? edd. P. Freeman, J. Bennett, Z.T. Fiema, and B. Hoffmann, *Limes XVIII, BAR*, Int. Ser. 1084, 2002 (Oxford), I, p.289; *cf.* C.B. Rose, The Parthians in Augustan Rome, *AJA*, CIX, 2005, pp.21-75; C.J. Simpson, Where is the Parthian? The Prima Porta Statue of Augustus Revisited, *Latomus*, LXIV, 2005, pp.82-90, although both are unaware of Wheeler's paper.

¹⁵⁹ K. Deller, in B. Pongratz-Leisten, K. Deller, E. Beibtreu, *Götterstreitwagen und Götterstandarten: Götter auf dem Feldzug und ihr Kult im Feldlager*, *BaM*, XXIII, 1992, p.292; *cf.* Polyæn. *Strat.* 7.4.

¹⁶⁰ G. Prachner, Bemerkungen zu den erbeuteten "signa militaria" der Samnitenkriege, *Militargeschichtliche Mitteilungen*, LIII, 1994, pp.3-5; trophy scene: *e.g.*, Lepper/Frere, pl. LVII (=Cichorius LXXVIII); burning weapons: App. *Mith.* 176; Rüpke, pp.199-200. Enemy *signa* are not listed among the decorations of victory adorning Rome at the time of Marcellus' capture of Syracuse (211 B.C.): Plut. *Marc.* 21.1-2.

¹⁶¹ See the catalogue of J.P.A. van der Vin, The Return of Roman Ensigns from Parthia, *BABesch*, LVI, 1981, pp.122-24, although an *aureus* from Spanish Colonia Patricia (no. 5) has a reverse displaying Mars holding an *aquila* standard in his right hand and a manipular standard in his left.

¹⁶² Tac. *Ann.* 1.61.4, 2.41.1; *cf.* *CIL* VI 906; R. Seager, *Tiberius*, 1972 (Berkeley/Los Angeles), pp.81-82.

¹⁶³ See Veith (*supra* n.118), p.518; Parker (*supra* n.141), pp.109-10. Agrippa deprived the I Augusta of its epithet for poor performance in the Cantabrian War (19 B.C.) and it perhaps received new *signa* as I Germanica (?) from Tiberius at some point before 14 A.D.: Dio 54.11.5; M.P. García-Bellido, Lingots estampillés en Espagne avec des marques de légions et d'Agrippa, in

aquila, Romans avoided religious language and appealed to honor in describing such losses: *dedecus* in Caesar (*BG* 4.25.3-5), *crimen* for Ovid (*Fast.* 3.114), *ignominia* in Livy (10.4.3.), and *pudet* for Frontinus (*Strat.* 2.8.4). *Aquilae* and *signa* are generally said to have been “lost” with a form of *amitto* or “seized/carried off” in the sense of stealing, denoted by *rapiolabripio* or *aufero*.¹⁶⁵ In contrast, the Greek Plutarch is quite explicit in using religious language to describe the loss of a *signum*.¹⁶⁶ Various “eagle and standards” gems, however, combining these *signa* with an altar reveal their true religious nature, which is also related to the right of asylum in some cases. In 14 A.D. the senatorial legate sent to the mutinous Rhine legions, L. Munatius Plancus, saved his life by embracing the *signa* and *aquila* of *legio I Germanica* in an apparent claim to *asylia*. The *aquilifer* Calpurnius also intervened to prevent a besmirching of these *altaria deum*. Similarly, Caracalla sought asylum before the *signa* at the shrine of Mars within the *castra praetoria* after Geta’s murder. At Syrian Apamea the II Parthica during Severus Alexander’s Persian war (231-233) set up a dedication exclusively to *aquilae et signis*.¹⁶⁷

Nor is the well-known stratagem of threatening to throw or actually hurling a *signum* (not always an *aquila*) into the enemy’s ranks to spur on hesitant troops or to increase motivation necessarily a non-religious act.¹⁶⁸ When Caesar’s Tenth Legion hesitated to storm ashore during the first invasion of Britain (55 B.C.) the legion’s *aquilifer* added an oath to the gods to his challenge to his comrades not to permit loss of the *aquila*. At the Roman assault on Hanno’s camp near Beneventum (212 B.C.), Vibius Accas, prefect of the Paelignian cohort of *socii*, threw his unit’s *vexillum* inside the Carthaginian rampart

Le Bohec/Wolff (*supra* n.45), p.689; *cf.* Tac. *Ann.* 1.42.6 with Parker, pp.86-87. The XII Fulminata’s supposed loss of its *aquila* in Cestius Gallus’ Jewish campaign of November 66 may not be so great a stain on its record as often supposed: Helgeland, *Army*, p.1475; Stoll, *Integration*, p.270 with n.261. Josephus (*BJ* 2.500, 527-55) does not mention the loss of an *aquila* and a specific legion is not named at Suet. *Vesp.* 4.5. The case rests on the XII Fulminata’s being the only legion at full force in the expeditionary force. A claim (Goldsworthy, *supra* n.142, pp.200-201) that the *primipilaris* of XII Fulminata, A. Instuleius Tenax, was transferred and demoted to centurion in the X Fretensis (*ILS* 8759a, 65 A.D., Thebes; *AE* 1923.83, Ascalon) because of the *aquila*’s loss has no basis: *AE* 1923.83 cannot be precisely dated. *Cf.* Dobson (*supra* n.139), pp.196-97 no. 66, who does not recognize any such demotion.

¹⁶⁴ C. Scribonius Curio (*cos.* 76 B.C.) disbanded a mutinous legion in 75 B.C. during his campaign against the Dardani (Front. *Strat.* 4.1.43), but its members were redistributed among his other four legions. Frontinus’ language for disbanding the legion is: *signa summittere nomenque abolere*.

¹⁶⁵ *E.g.*, *amitto*: Liv. 27.12.17, 42.66.10; *RGDA* 29.1; Vell. 2.97; Tac. *Ann.* 2.41.1; Oros. 4.1.11; *rapiolabripio*: Tac. *Ann.* 1.61.4; *Hist.* 2.43.1; 3.22.4; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.5; *aufero*: Tac. *Hist.* 2.43.1; Dio’s Greek at 55.10.4 and 68.9.3 is consistent with Latin usage.

¹⁶⁶ Plut. *Aem.* 20.2: οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν Ἰταλοῖς θεμιτὸν οὐδ’ ὄσιον ἐγκαταλιπεῖν σημεῖον. Although the context of Plutarch’s statement refers to the Paelignian *socii* at the Battle of Pydna (168 B.C.), it seems too fine a distinction to claim Romans would not share the same attitude.

¹⁶⁷ Gems: Henig (*supra* n.108), p.111; Planctus: Tac. *Ann.* 1.39.4, which Stoll (*Integration*, pp.261 n.212, 295 n.271) first attempts to counter with a comparison to *asylia* at statues of the emperor, as if statues of Augustus or Tiberius (not mentioned by Tacitus) were present, and then with a claim that these *signa* bore portraits of gods, but both these circumventions of the text are conjectures; Caracalla: Hdn. 4.4.5; *cf.* 5.8.5-6; II Parthica: Balty/van Rengen (*supra* n.153), p.22 with pl. 1—a text that calls into question the assertion that dedications to the *signa* alone (*i.e.* without a reference to Juppiter, a *genius*, or the emperor’s *numen*) never occurred: *cf.* Ankersdorfer and Stoll at *supra* n.107. Note also the *excubatio* exclusively *ad aquilam et signa*: text with n.174 *infra*.

¹⁶⁸ See Front. *Strat.* 2.8.1, 2 (*cf.* Liv. 3.70.10-11), 3, 4 (*cf.* Liv. 6.8.2), 5 (*cf.* Plut. *Aem.* 20.2); Flor. 1.11.2; Liv. 25.14.4-7; 26.5.15; 34.46.12-13; Caes. *BG* 4.25.3-4. The motivating power of this classical exemplum was not lost on later commanders. At the second Battle of Fribourg (1644) after his troops had failed in three assaults to capture an entrenchment, the Prince of Condé threw his marshal’s baton into the enemy works with the words, “Allons, mes amis, il faut l’aller reprendre.” The fourth attack captured the position. See H. Lloyd, *Mémoires Militaires*, 1801 (Paris), p.44 n.1.

and uttered a curse (*exsecratus*). The act, although lacking the corresponding ritual preparation of a Roman *devotio*, seems not unrelated in concept.¹⁶⁹

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[[260]] If the foregoing survey of the *signa* and their origins has been successful, it should be obvious that *signa* were religious objects in their own right. The *signa* were not gods, but they did represent the gods' presence in much the same way as an icon or statue provides a focus for religious devotion in some Christian sects. Further, veneration of the *signa* antedated *Kaiserkult*. Stoll's argument that the *religio* of the *signa* depends on the presence of imperial portraits—whether attached to the *signa* or accompanied by independent *imagines*—assumes the correctness of Rüpke's view (contested here) that the *signa* had no religiosity of their own. This supposed dependency of the *signa* on imperial portraits for their holiness begs for further examination.

As Vegetius knew, the *signa* had their own special place within a legionary camp, which excavations have shown to be 60-110 m² in the precise center of the camp in the *principia*. In some cases even sockets and bases for placement of the standards are preserved.¹⁷⁰ Creation of a special area for the *signa* must coincide with the beginnings of permanent legionary camps in the Julio-Claudian period, but all documentary evidence of a name for this area belongs to the third century and is not legionary: at Reculver, *aedes p[rinci]piorum*; at Aalen, *C[ap][i]/tol[i]um*; and an Egyptian papyrus, *in adyti therape[/ in aedem aquilae*.¹⁷¹ Yet statues of emperors in army camps, honorific in character rather than religious, generally occur not in this *aedes* but in the *basilica* of the *principia*.¹⁷² An early connection of the *signa* with *Kaiserkult* would thus appear tenuous, especially as not all *signa* carried or were required to carry imperial portraits and the *aedes* for the *signa* did not initially include statues of an emperor.

For Stoll, however, any reference to an *aedes* for the *signa* must connote the daily watch assigned to guard the *signa* and the *imagines*. "Morning reports" of the cohort XX Palmyrenorum not only show the abbreviation *ad sacrahim* and *ad sacrahimag* for *ad sacra et imagines*, but also specify for Alexander Severus and Gordian III *ad signa d(omini) n(ostris)*.¹⁷³ A coalescence of the veneration of the *signa* and *Kaiserkult* by the third century is not in dispute and the details of a cult of the *signa* and the *aquila* in army camps are not this paper's concern. But third-century evidence cannot be legitimately retrojected into the first and second centuries. The *signa*, as shown above, were holy objects and revered as such *before* the creation of *Kaiserkult*. The *signa* did not owe their religiosity to the attachment or accompanying presence of imperial portraits/busts. Significantly, a papyrus of the mid 60s, which may concern the legion XXII Deiotariana, assigned the daily watch only *ad aquilam et signa*. Imperial portraits are not explicitly included.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁹ Caes. *BG* 4.25.3-4; Liv. 25.14.4-6; Val.Max. 3.2.20; Renel, p.294-95: formula and rules for a *devotio*: Liv. 8.9.4-8, 10.11-11.1; cf. Rüpke, pp.156-61 with bibliography.

¹⁷⁰ Veg. 3.8.15; von Petrikovits (*supra* n.88), pp.75, 141; Stäcker, pp.205-207, 241.

¹⁷¹ Reculver: *AE* 1962.258; Aalen: *AE* 2001.1566; *P.Mich.* VII 450+455, fr. b.16-17 (=Fink, no. 53, p.205); M. Reddé, *Refléxions critiques sur les chapelles militaires (aedes principiorum)*, *JRA*, XVII, 2004, pp.442-62 at p.448 n.8; cf. Stoll (*supra* n.3), p.48 with n.221, citing P. Turnovsky, *Die Innenausstattung der römischen Lagerheiligtümer*, diss.Vienna, 1990, pp.22-23; creation of the first *aedes signorum* in the Claudian-Neronian period: Stäcker, p.241 with references and a conjecture about Augustan and Tiberian practice. Stoll (*Integration*, p.262) regards all terms for the sanctuary of the *signa* in literary sources as unreliable.

¹⁷² Stäcker, p.223-48; cf. Reddé (*supra* n.171), p.454-55, 457, 460.

¹⁷³ Stoll, *Integration*, p.265 with n.236, summarizing from his *Excubatio* (*supra* n.3), pp.41-49 and citing Fink, no. 1.i.4, ii.12, xii.2, xiii.7, xxi.11, xxxii.12; no. 47.i.6, 17; no. 49.1; no. 50.i.1, 8; cf. *ILS* 2355 (Aquincum, 216 A.D.) *excubitorium ad tutelam signorum et imaginum sacrarum*.

¹⁷⁴ *PSI* XIII 1307.ii.11, 17 (=Fink, no. 51, pp.199-200); for the date and a possible connection with XXII Deiotariana, see R.W. Davies, Minicius Iustus and a Roman Military Document from Egypt, *Aegyptus*, LIII, 1973, pp.75-92.

[[261]] Jewish and Christian sources asserting worship of the *signa* have been easy targets for critics because of the general rejection of idolatry in these religions.¹⁷⁵ Exaggerations are claimed. But what is an “exaggeration?” Both Roman and Greek pagans either assert the highest veneration of the *signa* or speak of them in religious terms. Even the Christian Vegetius says that nothing is more venerable to soldiers than the *signa*.¹⁷⁶ Tertullian’s statements that soldiers swear by the *signa* are true, as is the general impression of the *signa*’s importance.¹⁷⁷ His assertions that the *signa* were deified and preferred to Juppiter can be conceded, since Tertullian seems not to have understood that the *aquila* represented Juppiter. Likewise, his view that soldiers preferred the *signa* to all the other gods mistakes the relationship between the *signa* and the gods.

Another argument questionably asserts that the *signa* lacked any primary religious significance because verbs used to describe their worship, *venerari* and *adorare*, to which *colere* may be added, lack “Beweiskraft.”¹⁷⁸ Josephus calls the *signa hiera* and records a sacrifice (alleged to be unparalleled) to the *signa* in the court of the Temple at Jerusalem after its capture in 70. No doubt this sacrifice celebrated the victory of Roman gods over Yahweh. If the sacrifice can be explained away (although not convincingly so) as directed to supposed imperial portraits attached to the *signa* rather than to the *signa* themselves (as Josephus states),¹⁷⁹ Josephus’ *hiera* falls in the same category as *venerari*, *adorare*, and *colere*, religious terms allegedly lacking *Beweiskraft* to prove religious belief. The appeal to *Beweiskraft* conveniently adduces fine distinctions of nuance in the religious tenor of these words or implies misuse/misunderstanding of these terms, but in the final analysis this appeal requires subjective and therefore disputable judgment. If more objective evidence is desired, Josephus’ *hiera* corresponds to the *ad sacra* of the Dura “morning reports” (see *supra*); a parallel to the sacrifice at Jerusalem to the *signa* exclusively (although not—so far as known—in the context of a victory) might be deduced from the dedication of the II Parthica at Apamea to the *aquila* and *signa* (*supra* n.167), but more compelling evidence is available.

Among the documents at Qumran a commentary on the book of Habakkuk, dated c.50 B.C. at the latest, describes the devastation wrought by the Kittim and some of their military practices. In this case the Kittim are almost certainly Romans. They are said to sacrifice to their military standards and to worship their weapons of war. For Stoll, this commentary indicates that the misunderstandings of Tertullian and other Christians about the religious veneration of the *signa* had Qumran antecedents and, like Josephus, the Hakkakuk commentator shunned idolatry and misinterpreted the veneration of the *signa*.¹⁸⁰ Certainly **[[262]]** cultural differences and religious blinders can always be alleged, although any direct familiarity of Tertullian or even Josephus with this Qumran commentary is unknown and unlikely. Yet the commentator’s obvious familiarity with some Roman army practices discounts a view of pure fabrication

¹⁷⁵ Ankersdorfer, p.32; Stoll (*supra* n.3), p.39, and *Integration*, pp.263, 293.

¹⁷⁶ Ov. *Fast.* 3.115-16 (quoted *supra* n.119): *reverentia*; Dion.Hal. *Ant.Rom.* 6.45.2 (*supra* n.148): most honored . . . like temples of the gods; Tac. *Ann.* 1.39.4 (*supra*, text at n.167): equated with *altaria deum*; Plut. *Aem.* 20.2 (*supra* n.166): religious language; Veg. 3.8.15 (*supra* n.51).

¹⁷⁷ *Apol.* 16.8: *religio Romanorum tota castrensis signa veneratur, signa iurat, signa omnibus deis praeponeat; Ad nat.* 1.12: *itaque in Victoriis et cruceis colit castrensis religio, signa adorant, signa deierat, signa ipsi Iovi praefert; cf.* Min.Fel. *Oct.* 29.7 (quoted at *supra* n.128); oaths by the *signa*: *supra*, text with n.115.

¹⁷⁸ Ankersdorfer, pp.31-32, followed by Stoll *Integration*, p.265 with further elaboration.

¹⁷⁹ Jos. *BJ* 3.124, 6.316; Stoll, *Integration*, pp.291-92, who does not object to the sacrifice as a celebration of the victory of Roman gods over Yahweh; v.Dom., *Religion*, p.12; Helgeland, *Army*, p.1503; H. Schwier, *Tempel und Tempelzerstörung: Untersuchungen zu den theologischen und ideologischen Faktoren im ersten jüdisch-römischen Krieg (66-74 n. Chr.)*, 1989 (Göttingen), p.315. *Schlachthelfer* in Roman campaigns, battles, and sieges will be addressed in Part II.

¹⁸⁰ *1QpHab.* 6.2-5, tr. Vermes (*supra* n.64), p.286; Stoll *Integration*, pp.281-84; cf. Dirven (*supra* n.102), p.132.

about the sacrifice. Indeed the assertion of worship of weapons may be a confused view of the *hasta* as the basic element in all *signa* or “arms” may be used generically rather than specifically. More significantly, for a work of c.50 B.C. *Kaiserkult* or imperial portraits can by no means be a factor in explaining the sacrifice. The subtleties of Roman veneration of the *signa* may have escaped the commentator, but his picture of religious awe for the *signa* fits the argument of this paper rather than the view of *signa* as utensils.

After his murder of Geta (212 A.D.), Caracalla rushed off to secure his own safety in the *castra praetoria*. There in the camp’s temple, where the *signa* and the imagines of the camp were worshiped, he threw himself on the ground, promised thanks to the gods, and sacrificed for his safety.¹⁸¹ Caracalla obviously performed a religious act and (fortunately in this case) no one calls into question the religious meaning of προσκυνεῖται. The temple, an *aedes sacra*, belonged to Mars, for which a possible *antistes* in 217 and an *antistes sacerdos* later in the third century are known. Otherwise this Praetorian temple as a cult to Mars, not mentioned in Herodian or other literary sources, is obscure. Von Domaszewski’s connection of this cult with his theory of Septimius Severus’ introduction of *Kaiserkult* is fanciful, as the Praetorians, interested in living emperors exclusively and having daily familiarity with the realities of the emperor, showed little interest in *Kaiserkult*.¹⁸²

Herodian’s description of Caracalla’s supplication and sacrifice has prompted discussion, as Herodian is assumed to offer a model for the *aedes* of the *signa* in a legionary or auxiliary camp, although a temple in the *castra praetoria* at Rome dedicated to a specific god need not be typical. The *agalmata* in the Praetorians’ Mars temple are unlikely to have been statues of emperors.¹⁸³ *agalma* would be an inappropriate term for an emperor’s statue in any case and especially not in Rome, as its cult associations were too intense for the games played with *Kaiserkult* in the provinces.¹⁸⁴ Surely there was an *agalma* of Mars in his own temple and one of Juppiter can be conjectured, as the Praetorians had no *aquila* to represent him. For present purposes, the significance of Herodian’s passage is the coupling of the *signa* and the *agalmata*, presenting a state of *synnaoi theoi*.¹⁸⁵ Granted, *signa* of the Praetorians are known to have featured imperial portraits,¹⁸⁶ but Herodian’s coupling of the two terms suggests that the *signa* were significant in their own right and had a status beside cult statues of gods. Why mention the *signa* in this context, if they were utensils of no religious value or derived their holiness from imperial portraits? Notable, too, is the distinction in Greek, not so clear in [[263]] Latin, between ἄγαλμα, an image that receives a cult, and εἰκών, an honorific or votive image. When Josephus appears to equate the *signa* with the *imagines* at *BJ* 2.169, he speaks of τὰς Κάϊσαρος εἰκόνες. Likewise, Dexippus’ account of a Juthungian embassy to Aurelian in 270 mentions the presence of *aquillae* and εἰκόνες βασιλῆιαι, the

¹⁸¹ Hdn. 4.4.5: ... δὲ εἰσέπεσεν ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον ἕξ τε τὸν νεών, ἔνθα τὰ σημεῖα καὶ τὰ ἀγάλματα τοῦ στρατοπέδου προσκυνεῖται, ῥίψας ἑαυτὸν ἐς γῆν ὠμολόγει τε χαριστήρια ἔθνέ τε σωτήρια. Cf. Hdn. 5.8.5-6, where the same temple figures in the prelude to Elagabalus’ murder.

¹⁸² *CIL* IX 1609: *antistes* (restored); *ILS* 2090: *antistes sacerdos*, on which see Wheeler (*supra* n.81); Praetorian cult of Mars: A. von Domaszewski, *Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres*, ed. B. Dobson, 1967 (Cologne), pp.22-23, and *Religion*, p.47; but cf. M. Durry, *Les cohortes prétoriennes*, 1938 (Paris), pp.312-13, 321.

¹⁸³ See Stäcker, p.241 with n.102, correcting many, to whom should be added Rüpke, p.187. Cf. v.Dom., *Religion*, 12, citing Tac. *Hist.* 1.36.1 on a golden statue of Galba in the Praetorians’ camp in 68, but there is no evidence that an *aedes* existed in the *castra praetoria* at that time.

¹⁸⁴ Stäcker, p.224.

¹⁸⁵ Noted by Stoll, *Integration*, p.262, but without recognition of its implications for his argument. On the concept see A.D. Nock, *Σύνναος Θεός*, *HSCP*, XLI, 1930, pp.1-62; cf. Stäcker, p.224 with n.3.

¹⁸⁶ See Zwicker at *supra* n.134.

imagines. Artabanus II of Parthia allegedly (see *infra*) sacrificed to *eikones* of Augustus and Caligula at his conference with L. Vitellius in 37. The Greek recognizes the original political purpose of the *imagines* and imperial portraits on *signa*, but does not designate them as having any religious value.¹⁸⁷

Finally, a *deditio* or a diplomatic act, in which a foreign power formally recognized Roman superiority, occasioned a display of power both terrestrial and divine. In 270 Aurelian made careful preparations to overawe a peace embassy from the Iuthungi with an exhibition of Roman might and grandeur. Dexippus describes in detail the army drawn up for battle to intimidate the Iugunthi ambassadors, Aurelian sitting in his imperial purple atop a lofty tribunal with his entourage on horseback forming a crescent around him, and behind the Emperor the *signa* of his expeditionary army: gold *aquillae*, the *imagines*, and *vexilla* specifying in gold letters the individual legions—all on silver *hastae*. The Iuthungian ambassadors were dumbfounded at the sight.¹⁸⁸ Trajan's Column offers a visual presentation of such a scene for the end of the first war (102 A.D.): Trajan seated at left, a host of Dacians on their knees in supplication before him, and Decebalus (on the far right) standing at the rear of the Dacians with his right arm extended. Not obscurely, Roman *signa* behind Trajan tower over the scene and Dacian *vexilla* and *dracones* oversee the defeated suppliants. Tacitus offers a similar scenario for Tiridates' surrender of the Armenian crown to Corbulo in 63 at Rhandaia and adds the presence of *simulacra deum in modum templi*.¹⁸⁹

Further, in recounting his settlement of barbarian problems on the lower Danube c.62 as governor of Moesia (60-66/67), Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus (*cos.suf.* 45, *cos.* 74) states that *inter alia* he stopped a movement of Sarmatians (probably Rhoxolani) and *ignotos ante aut infensos p. R. reges signa Romana adoratuos in ripam quam tuebtur perduxit*. Similar language occurs in various sources for the Euphrates conference of L. Vitellius and Artabanus II in 37, when the Parthian king is alleged to have adored the *signa* and/or imperial portraits or **[[264]]** to have sacrificed to images of Augustus and Caligula.¹⁹⁰ Some, of course, again raise the issue of the meaning of *venerari* and *adorare*, as well as the contention that not the *signa* but imperial portraits are the objects of adoration.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁷ Dexippus, *FGrH* 100 fr. 6.2; Dio 59.27.3; on the distinction of ἄγαλμα from εἰκὼν see Nock (*supra* n.185), pp.3-4; cf. Stäcker's inconclusive discussion (*supra* n.51, pp.223-24) on the Greek and Latin vocabulary for imperial images and statues. At *AJ* 18.55, the parallel passage to *BJ* 2.169, Josephus describes the imperial portraits as προτομὰς Καίσαρος, which provokes discussion (see Zwicker and Stäcker at *supra* n.134), as if both passages have equal validity. The *AJ*, finished in 93/94, comes more than a decade after the completion of *BJ* 1-6 in 79 or at latest in 81. Even if Josephus did use the *commentarii* of L. Vitellius for *AJ* 18, as recently argued, Vitellius was not yet the Syrian governor at the time of Pilate's provocation of the Jews c.26. Josephus' curious *variatio* of vocabulary does not seem significant for present purposes, as προτομή has no more religious significance in Greek than εἰκὼν. See C.P. Jones, Towards a Chronology of Josephus, *SCI*, XXI, 2002, pp.120-21; T.D. Barnes, The Sack of the Temple in Josephus and Tacitus, edd. J. Edmundson *et al.*, *Josephus and Flavian Rome*, 2005 (Oxford), p.140; A. Galimberti, I *Commentarii* di L. Vitellio e la fonte romana del XVIII libro delle *Antichità Giudaiche* di Flavio Giuseppe, *Historia*, XLVIII, 1999, pp.224-34.

¹⁸⁸ Dexippus, *FGrH* 100 fr.6.2-3. I take Dexippus' unusual στρατοπέδων κατάλογοι γράμμασι χρυσοῖς δηλοῦμενοι as either legionary *vexilla* or *vexilla* attached to manipular *signa*. Cf. Renel, p.283 on the *signa*'s ability to inspire fear in Rome's enemies.

¹⁸⁹ Lepper/Frere, pls. LIV-LV (=Cichorius LXXV, scenes 193-98); Tac. *Ann.* 15.29.2-3; cf. Suet. *Nero* 13.1: Nero's crowning of Tiridates I at Rome, where *aquillae* of the legions are conspicuously absent among the *signa* and the *vexilla* mentioned. Von Domaszewski (*Religion*, pp.2-3) explains the lack of references to images of the gods in Dexippus fr. 6.2 and Suet. *Nero* 13.2 from the presence of divine images on the *signa*.

¹⁹⁰ Silvanus: *ILS* 986; Artabanus: Suet. *Calig.* 14.3: *transgressus Euphraten aquilas et signa Romana Caesarumque imagines adoravit*; *Vit.* 2.4: *ad veneranda legionum signa pellexit* [scil. *Vitellius*]; Dio 59.27.3: sacrifice to the *eikones* of Augustus and Caligula. Tacitus' account is lost. Stoll (*Integration*, p.263) follows Ankersdorfer's error (p.31) in dating the conference to 40, although Vitellius' governorship of Syria ended in 39, and commits one of his own in stating that L. Vitellius later became emperor. His son Aulus was the Emperor Vitellius in 69.

¹⁹¹ Ankersdorfer, pp.31-32; Stoll, *Integration*, pp.263-65.

Generalizations are hazardous. Tiridates' surrender of his Armenian crown in the presence of Corbulo's army legally required that Nero's image be the focal point, for the Parthian prince was relinquishing Arsacid claims to Armenia and seeking legitimacy as the client king of a Roman possession. The procedure in this case says nothing about the religiosity of the *signa*. Notably, however, in earlier negotiations Vologaeses I specified his willingness to allow Tiridates to appear *ad signa et effigies principis* to receive the crown—equal billing. Much the same could be said for the *deditio* of Zorsines, king of the Sarmatian Siraci, who had supported Mithridates VIII against the Roman candidate Cotys I in the Borporan civil war of 44-45. After the capture of his capital at Upse and the Roman massacre of the prisoners, he surrendered to the combined forces of Cotys I and the Bithynian cohorts of the equestrian Iulius Aquila, delivered hostages, and *apud effigiem Caesaris procubuit*. No *aquilae* were present, as legionary forces of the Moesian legate A. Didius Gallus had withdrawn after securing the throne for Cotys. But surely auxiliary *signa* and images of the gods can be posited in this very abbreviated account of a *deditio*, which probably resembled that supervised by Plautus Silvanus Aelianus more than the elaborate scene at Rhandaia.¹⁹²

Artabanus' homage to Roman symbols at the Euphrates conference of 37 raises a host of questions: Tacitus' account is lost; Josephus mentions no such act; and Suetonius contradicts himself, stating the *signa* at one place but the *signa, aquila*, and imperial portraits at another; and Dio names the images of Augustus and Caligula. Indeed all accounts of what transpired at the conference are absurd and the date of the conference (late under Tiberius or early under Caligula) is unclear. No Parthian *rex regum* in the first century, however, would have crossed the Euphrates to do homage to Roman symbols and thereby essentially declare himself a Roman client, nor does Josephus' story that Herod Antipas hosted a banquet in the middle of the Euphrates convey an ounce of reality. As both Suetonius (*Vit.* 2.4) and Dio (59.27.3) emphasize Vitellius' cleverness in arranging Artabanus' act of homage, in all probability the accounts of Suetonius and Dio preserve Vitellius' own account of the conference, to which the explicit reference to Caligula's *imago* lends support for an event of Tiberius' last days. Vitellius, after all, had a reputation for flattery—a tool for survival under Caligula.¹⁹³ The Roman-Parthian conference of 37 will not disprove the religiosity of the *signa*.

[[265]] In the final analysis, the nuances of *venerari* and *adorare*, although still subjective and ambiguous in conveying either a religious or a secular tone, assume a different potential when the worshipers are non-Romans. The Qumran commentator thought the Romans worshiped their weapons. Vitellius' pretension that he had induced a Parthian king to bow before the sacred symbols of Rome convinced Suetonius and Cassius Dio. It can easily be imagined that Sarmatians on the lower Danube thought that they were worshipping Roman gods when they bowed before Plautus Silvanus Aelianus' *signa*.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² Tac. *Ann.* 12.15-17; v.Dom., *Religion*, p.2 n.3; on the Bithynian base of Aquila's forces, see M.P. Speidel/D.H. French, *Bithynian Troops in the Kingdom of the Bosphorus*, *EA*, VI, 1985, pp.97-102.

¹⁹³ See K.-H. Ziegler, *Die Beziehungen zwischen Rom und dem Partherreich*, 1964 (Wiesbaden), pp.62-63; M. Schottky, *Parther, Meder und Hyrkanier. Eine Untersuchung der dynastischen und geographischen Verflechtungen im Iran des 1. Jhs. n. Chr.*, *AMI*, N.F. XXIV, 1991, p.83; E. Paltiel, *Vassals and Rebels in the Roman Empire*, *Collection Latomus*, CCXII, 1991 (Brussels), pp.154-56. Galimberti's thesis of Josephus' use of Vitellius' *commentarii* is not aided by his ignorance of Ziegler's arguments: (*supra* n.187), pp.231-32.

¹⁹⁴ Possible cross-cultural influence should also be noted. A recent paper argues that the *signa* of the *Dea Syriae* at Hierapolis and the *signa* of the gods at Hatra were altered to resemble Roman *signa militaria*, although particularly for Hatra one wonders if sufficient contact with Roman armies existed to make such influence credible for the second century. See Dirven (*supra* n.102), pp.119-36.

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Religion, as argued here, played an active role in Roman warfare between Caesar and Constantine, whose conversion to Christianity began a new chapter in an old book rather than initiating an entirely different volume. Belief in the gods' favor stimulated morale and Romans brought their gods with them to the battleline in the various forms of *signa*. In this respect the Romans did not differ from their opponents. A brief summary of *signa* in both earlier and contemporary societies will give an impression of how contrasting *signa* on the battlefield presented a visual image of battles of the gods.

Some of the original five totemic Roman *signa* of Pliny have parallels in other civilizations. The eagle appears as a *signum* already on the Stele of the Vulture of Eanantum of Lagish (c.2450 B.C.), enjoyed some favor under the Achaemenid Persians, and is featured on the helmet of the Sasanid Hormizd II (303-309).¹⁹⁵ Of course *signa*, frequently but not always theriomorphic, are essentially synonymous with Near Eastern warfare from the earliest records. Besides Sumerians, they are known for Egyptians, Assyrians and even Hebrews, although the scholarly literature is more concerned with their form than their religious meaning in warfare.¹⁹⁶ The most evidence, however, comes from the Neo-Assyrians, who made no distinction between standards for cult in urban temples and the army's *signa*, mobile gods on campaigns. Assyrian *signa* had their own priesthood and Assyrian army camps featured a special "House of the Standards," which parallels the later *aedes* in Roman camps, although in peacetime (unlike Romans of the Republic) the Assyrian *signa* could not be stored away, as they required daily cult rituals. Indeed putting a new chariot (decorated with holy *signa*) into commission required a special ritual.¹⁹⁷

[[266]] Turning to Rome's chief Eastern opponents, the Iranian armies of first the Parthians, then the Sasanids, *signa* are known from passing references but without much substance for either their form or their religious significance. Florus mentions *signa auro sericisque vexillis vibrantia* in Surena's army at Carrhae (53 B.C.) and Tacitus briefly describes dynastic banners of the Parthian cavalry—appropriate for the semi-feudal structure of the Parthian army—at Tiridates' surrender of his crown to Corbulo. Tertullian even claimed Parthians worshiped a linen flag with an emblem of the sun.¹⁹⁸ But, more intriguingly, Lucian's ridicule of Philo of Corinth, an historian of Verus' Parthian war (161-166) and an alleged eyewitness to events from his writing table in Greece, offers an account of Parthian *dracones*, the only source to attribute this type of *signum* to the Parthians. Although Lucian (*Hist. conscr.* 29) corrects Philo in specifying that the *draco* signified a unit of 1,000, there is more here than meets the eye, as no evidence suggests denial of Parthian *dracones* and much supports it. The Parthians, descendants of the Iranian world of Central Asia, probably shared use of *dracones* with their Scythian and Sarmatian Alan cousins. Arrian (*Tact.* 35.2) calls the *dracones* Scythian *signa*. The personal banners of an Alan chieftain, unearthed from his tomb near Azov at the mouth of the Tanais (Don) River in 1986, resemble *dracones*

¹⁹⁵ Sarre (*supra* n.99), p.336-37, 244-50; Renel, p.52; R. Göbl, *Sasanian Numismatics*, 1971 (Braunschweig), Pl. 5 nos. 80-85.

¹⁹⁶ Sumerians: K. Szarzynska, *Archaic Sumerian Standards*, *JCunSt*, XLVIII, 1996, pp.1-15; Egyptians: Sarre (*supra* n.99), pp.334-35; Renel, pp.53-60; Szarzynska, pp.1-2 with fig. 2; for Greek rationalizations of Egyptian theriomorphic *signa*: see Diod. 1.86.4-5, 90.1-2; Plut. *Mor.* 379F-380B; Hebrews: Num. 1:52; 2:1-34; 10:14, 18, 22, 25; Sarre, pp.336, whose contention that Hebrew armies carried a portrait of Yahweh into battle before the reign of Solomon does not seem to be supported by his citations (as checked against English translations and Jerome's Vulgate), although Num. 2:1-34 and 10:11-28 point to 4 standards for groupings of 3 tribes besides a standard for each tribe individually; e.g., Num. 2:2: *singuli per turmas, signa et vexilla et domos cognationum suarum castrametabuntur filiorum Israhel*. Shahbazi (*supra* n.101) on Persian, Parthian, and Armenian *signa* does not discuss the religious meaning of *signa*.

¹⁹⁷ I offer only the briefest summary of the rich material found in Pongratz-Leisten, Deller, and Bleibtreu (*supra* n.159), pp.291-56; ritual for war chariots: Deller, pp.341-46; catalogue of illustrations with commentary: Bleibtreu, pp.347-56 with Taf. 50-66.

¹⁹⁸ Flor. 1.46.8; Tac. *Ann.* 15.29.2: *eques compositus per turmas et insignibus patriis*; Tert. *Apol.* 16.9; Shahbazi (*supra* n.101), pp.313-14.

and the medieval Ossetians, Alan descendants, used similar banners, which did have religious connections. A similar Scythian banner of c.100 B.C. is now known from Crimean Neapolis. *Dracones* continued in use among steppe-peoples of Central Asia during the Middle Ages.¹⁹⁹ Hence Romans would have seen *dracones* when facing either Parthians or Alans.

Moreover, Philo's incredible tale of how Parthians used *dracones* is more than the joke Lucian makes of it. Philo portrays the *dracones* as huge, live snakes from somewhere beyond Caucasian Iberia; the Parthians attached them to poles and at close range released them to devour and crush the Romans in their coils like the famous Hellenistic group sculpture of Laocoon and his sons at Troy. Romans demonized the East in many ways and Philo's tale would no doubt have been believable to his audience, although Arrian, *philosophus* as well as *dux*, rationalized Roman use of *dracones* as a stratagem to terrorize the enemy (*Tact.* 35.2-3). Parthians and Sasanids were thought to use magic as a weapon in warfare, so much so that Julius Africanus devoted part of his *Cesti* to instructing Severus Alexander on means to counter it on the eve of his Persian war (232). The mysterious East aroused Roman fears especially for those unfamiliar with it. Titus' soldiers in 70 trembled at the prospects of attacking Yahweh's temple (Dio 66.6.2-3). In one view, Roman soldiers set up inscriptions to *genii loci* from fear of the local gods.²⁰⁰ Philo's tale of the *dracones* fits the mentality and cultural context of the role of *Schlachthelfer* in Roman warfare.

For Sasanid *signa* both literary and material evidence far exceeds that available for the Parthians. *Dracones* are plentiful in addition to numerous references to dynastic banners in the Armenian historian, Ps.-Faustus of Byzand, as well as many different types of *signa* recorded in the epic *Shah-nama*. Even a silver fragment of a Sasanid *draco* is preserved in [[267]] St. Petersburg. As Zoroastrian teachings included magical means for protection of the individual soldiers, a solely secular use of *signa* seems unlikely. In the twilight of the Sasanid Empire Heraclius captured 27 Persian *signa* at the Battle of Nineveh (12 Dec. 627).²⁰¹

Nor did Romans have to cross the Mediterranean to encounter foes with strange *signa*. Some (*e.g.*, Etruscans, Samnites) were homegrown in Italy and struggles with other Italians occasioned the first records of captured standards in 310 B.C.—a practice continued in struggles against Gauls and Spaniards. Caesar made a point of noting the 74 Gallic *signa* taken at Alesia.²⁰² But just as the Roman eagle had parallels in the East, the totemic Roman *signa* of the boar and the horse had Celtic and German parallels and appear among the trophies on the Arch at Orange. The boar, a Celtic favorite, even inspired the *carnyx*, the boar-headed trumpet. An exclusive “Scythian” origin of the *draco* should also not be posited, as a Celtic variety existed.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ See S.A. Yatsenko, Archaeological Complex with Extremely Early Banners Found in the Territory of the Former USSR (End of I and Beginning of II Millenium AD), *ACSS*, VII, 2001, pp.45-54; Coulston (*supra* n.103), p.108.

²⁰⁰ J.Afric. *Cest.* 1.2.104-106 Vieillefond with Wheeler, Julius Africanus (*supra* n.10), esp. p.578; on *topoi* of the corrupting influence of the East, see Wheeler (*supra* n.55), pp.229-76, esp. 229-46; fear of *genii*: Helgeland, Army, p.1504.

²⁰¹ Literary references collected by Shahbazi (*supra* n.101), pp.313-14; *draco* fragment: K.V. Trever, The Silver Terminal of a Sassanian Standard, *ProcOrHermitageMus*, III, 1940, pp.167-80 (in Russian), cited at Yatsenko (*supra* n.199), p.54 n.17; magic: *Yasht* 14 (*supra* n.3); Nineveh: Theoph. *Chron. AM* 6118, p.319 Bonn; on the battle see W.E. Kaegi, *Heraclius: Emperor of Byzantium*, 2003 (Cambridge), pp.159-70.

²⁰² Caes. *BG* 7.88.4; records: Prachner (*supra* n.160), pp.3-5; on Italian and Gallic standards and a catalogue of *signa capta*, see Renel, pp.65-72.

²⁰³ Arch of Orange: Renel, pp.67-68 with figs. 13-14; Coulston (*supra* n.103), p.101; for the three-horned bull, another Celtic favorite and emblem of the ala Longiniana, see *CIL* XIII 8094; cf. *ILS* 9127; H. Lehner, Die Standarte der ala Longiniana, *BJ*, CXVII, 1908, 283-86; Haynes (*supra* n.108), p.154.

In the far north of Germania the primitive Aestii bore boar-masks, fought with clubs, and trusted in the mother of gods for their protection in battle.²⁰⁴ In some ways they were not so different from other German warriors, which two passages of Tacitus describe in a fitting conclusion to this paper. Tacitus relates that Germans enter battle believing in the presence of the god, whose effigies and *signa*, derived from the sacred groves, they take into battle and provide their principal source of courage.²⁰⁵ At the siege of the legionary camp at Vetera on the Rhine in late 69, Iulius Civilis astounded the besieged with the sight of his approaching forces, in which he had inserted new German contingents, fresh from across the Rhine and eager for plunder. These German natives, as befit their national custom, brought with them their holy images of wild beasts from the sacred forests and groves of their homeland. The contrast of veteran Romans with their *signa* and the Germans under the aegis of wild animals blended the traits of foreign and civil war.²⁰⁶ The rationalist Tacitus exaggerates Roman and German differences, for despite superior arms, a definite command and supply structure, and discipline, Romans, too, trusted in the favor and cooperation of their own gods to win. Roman conflicts, like those of other ancient peoples, involved battles of the gods. How this played out on the battlefield and in Roman strategy must be pursued elsewhere.

²⁰⁴ Tac. *Germ.* 45.2: *matrem deum venerantur. Insigne superstitionis formas aprorum gestant; id pro armis hominumque tutela securum deae cultorem etiam inter hostis praestat.*

²⁰⁵ *Germ.* 7.1-2: *non quasi in poenam nec ducis iussu sed velut deo imperante, quem adesse bellantibus credunt: effigiesque et signa quaedam detracta lucis in proelium ferunt. Quodque praecipuum fortitudinis incitamentum est.*

²⁰⁶ *Hist.* 4.22.2: *hinc veteranarum cohortium signa, inde depromptae silvis lucisve ferarum imagines, ut cuique genti inire proelium mos est, mixta belli civilis externique facie obstupescerant obsessos.*